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HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-NINTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2010–2011

COMPRISING PERIOD
6 December 2010—21 December 2010

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6 December 2010

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 6 December 2010

TREASURY

Anti-Avoidance (Tax Policy)

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): The Government are fully committed to tackling tax avoidance and will take necessary steps to protect the Exchequer and maintain fairness in the tax system.

At the June Budget the Government set out their commitment to improving predictability and stability in the tax system in "Tax policy-making: a new approach". In that discussion document, the Government announced that they will adopt a more strategic approach to the risk of avoidance. By building in sustainable defences to avoidance we will reduce the need for frequent legislative changes and limit the cases when the changes are introduced with immediate effect.

However, there will still be occasions where the Government need to introduce immediate changes to legislation in order to address significant avoidance risks. The Government's response to these risks will be balanced with their commitment to improving predictability and stability in the tax system. The Government will shortly publish a draft protocol that will set out the circumstances in which they will consider changing legislation with immediate effect. This will be published alongside the Government's response to the consultation on improving tax policy making on 9 December.

It is within this context that the Government are announcing today a number of changes to legislation to tackle tax avoidance. Some of these have immediate effect.

Group Mismatches

The Government are introducing legislation taking effect from 6 December to counter tax avoidance schemes that aim to reduce a group's liability to corporation tax through asymmetrical tax treatment of intra-group loans or derivatives (group mismatch schemes).

The legislation amends section 418 of the Corporation Tax Act 2009. Section 418 was introduced to block schemes that involve the provision of intra-group finance through the use of convertible securities. In the schemes the debtor company claims tax deductions for larger amounts than the credits on which the creditor company is chargeable. The amendments ensure that section 418 will apply where:

> a company connected with the creditor company is or may become entitled or required to acquire shares in a company; or
>
> amounts are taken into account under the loan relationship rules in determining the chargeable profits of a controlled foreign company.

Because of repeated avoidance in this area, and following the issue of a discussion document in March, HMRC has today published a technical note containing draft legislation to tackle group mismatch schemes using a principles-based or generic approach. This legislation will come into force from the date of Royal Assent to Finance Bill 2011, following further consultation on the detail.

Derecognition

The Government are introducing legislation taking effect from 6 December to counter tax avoidance schemes involving accounting derecognition. This follows consultation on a technical paper published by HMRC on 6 July.

The proposed legislation amends sections 311 and 312, and sections 599A and 599B, of the Corporation Tax Act 2009. This legislation addresses avoidance schemes under which, in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice (GAAP), amounts that are taxable under the rules on loan relationships and derivative contracts are not fully recognised in a company's accounts. In such cases, a company's corporation tax computations must be prepared on the assumption that all such amounts were fully recognised. The legislation currently applies only where a number of specific conditions are met, and has been amended on a number of occasions since its introduction in 2006, in response to new avoidance schemes that purport to circumvent the conditions.

As a result of persistent avoidance using derecognition schemes, the Government are announcing that the legislation will now apply as a general rule, without reference to specific conditions, wherever a company is a party to tax avoidance arrangements and, in accordance with GAAP, amounts are not fully recognised in its accounts. In addition, a company will be denied a debit for a loss arising on derecognition of a loan relationship or derivative contract, again where the company is party to tax avoidance arrangements.

Further details are contained in a draft explanatory note published on HMRC's website today, together with the proposed draft legislation.

Disguised Remuneration

As confirmed at the June Budget, the Government will introduce legislation to tackle arrangements involving trusts or other vehicles used to reward employees, which seek to avoid or defer the payment of income tax or national insurance contributions (NICs), including to provide a tax-advantaged alternative to saving beyond the annual and lifetime allowances available in a registered pension scheme.

A further announcement will be made shortly.

Functional Currency—Investment Companies

Draft legislation will be published on 9 December 2010, alongside other draft clauses for Finance Bill 2011, to counter avoidance involving changes in the functional currency of an investment company. The legislation will take effect for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 April 2011. This will ensure that when a UK resident investment company changes its functional currency no foreign exchange gains or losses arising from loan relationships or derivative contracts will be brought into account for tax purposes in the first period of account using the new functional currency.

At the same time, investment companies will be able to elect, prospectively, for a different functional currency for tax purposes than the currency used in the accounts.

VAT Supply Splitting

Draft legislation will be published on 9 December 2010, alongside other draft clauses for Finance Bill 2011, to counter avoidance relating to the supply of services where arrangements have been made for the supply of printed matter that is ancillary to those services to be made by a different supplier.

The VAT Act will be amended to withdraw zero-rating from printed matter where it is ancillary to a differently rated service, and where, if the service and printed matter had been supplied by a single company, the printed matter would not have been zero-rated.

The legislation will come into force from the date of Royal Assent to Finance Bill 2011, following consultation on the detail.

General Anti-Avoidance Rule

As announced in the June 22 discussion document "Tax policy making: a new approach", HMRC engaged informally over the summer with a range of interested parties to consider whether there was a case for a general anti-avoidance rule (GAAR) in the UK. Those discussions showed that there was some support for such a rule, but it was clear that there were also concerns that a rule would generate uncertainty about the tax treatment of business transactions and about how that uncertainty could be managed in practice.

I am setting in train a study programme to establish whether a GAAR could be framed to meet the objectives of deterring and countering tax avoidance in a fair way, while providing certainty, retaining a tax regime that is attractive to business and minimising compliance costs for businesses and HMRC and, if so, how the provisions of the GAAR might be framed.

This study will be led by Graham Aaronson QC, supported by a small group of experts. The membership of the group is being finalised, and details will be announced in January. The group will complete its study by 31 October 2011, informing Ministers of its conclusions and, if applicable, providing model provisions and explanatory notes. The Government will consider the outcome of this work as part of the Budget decision-making process, taking account of the impact on certainty for taxpayers as to the tax treatment of transactions and the implications for HMRC in terms of costs and other priorities. The Government would not introduce a GAAR without further formal public consultation.

I will place a copy of the terms of reference for the group in the Library of the House.

Disclosure of Inheritance Tax Avoidance

HMRC are today publishing a document in response to the consultation on bringing IHT on transfers of property into trust within the disclosure regime (DOTAS). The Government will, as planned, bring such transfers within DOTAS, but will make some changes to its implementation as a result of the consultation. The necessary regulations, taking into account those changes, will come into effect on 6 April 2011.

E-Communications (Mutual Sector)

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr Mark Hoban): The Government are committed to fostering diversity in financial services, promoting mutuals and creating a more competitive banking industry. Much of the legislation applying to mutuals has existed for a long time and an up-to-date legislative framework is a pre-requisite to a successful mutual sector.

Mutual societies are under a number of statutory obligations to communicate with their members or the public in the conduct of their business. Today the Government published a consultation document that proposes to amend legislation that will facilitate the use of electronic communications, such as e-mail, by the mutual sector to discharge these statutory obligations and allow mutuals to reduce their administrative costs.

The deadline for responses to the consultation is Friday 28 January 2011 and electronic copies of the consultation document, which includes the draft statutory instruments, will be deposited to the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

National Broadband Strategy

The Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (Mr Jeremy Hunt): I am pleased to announce that I will be publishing a national broadband strategy today. The strategy sets out how the Government plan to deliver their ambition to have the best superfast broadband network in Europe by 2015 and build on the commitments I made in my statement to the House on 8 June 2010.

A first class broadband infrastructure is essential for creating jobs, opportunities and economic growth in the digital age. Our country needs a reliable and secure broadband capability that encourages innovation and creativity, supports the year-on-year growth of our digital industries—now worth £130 billion or 10% of gross added value, and meets the growing demands of its 40 million users.

To that end, I was delighted to secure an unprecedented £830 million of public investment for broadband as part of the recent TV licence fee agreement.

The strategy published today will outline how Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) will use the £530 million available in this spending review period to support broadband and stimulate further private sector investment. It sets out the goal of delivering a fibre point in every community in the UK by the end of this Parliament, bringing superfast broadband within reach of communities urban and rural, and commits to ensuring that homes and businesses right across the UK are able to access a decent level of connectivity, even in the most remote areas.

The strategy includes:

a mixed-technology approach with fixed, wireless and satellite all having a role. It is recognised that one technology is not suitable for all circumstances, although high capacity fibre optic is likely to be a key feature of the UK's network;

ensuring access to existing infrastructure, including BT's network of ducts and poles and encouraging owners of other networks to develop new revenue streams through selling access to their infrastructure;

new guidance prepared in conjunction with the British Standards Institution and Building Research Establishment to builders and contractors on how to ensure new buildings are broadband-ready in the form of a publicly available specification (PAS 2016);

a commitment to the liberalisation of the 800MHz and 2.6GHz spectrum, to allow the development of next generation mobile services; and

working with local authorities to clarify existing guidance on streetworks and micro-trenching with the aim of reducing the cost of broadband roll-out.

I will also be announcing my proposal to use £50 million of the £530 million allocated in the spending review to support a further wave of rural projects in addition to the projects already announced in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, Cumbria, Herefordshire and North Yorkshire.

A copy of the strategy and a full copy of my speech will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

EDUCATION

Children's Commissioner Review

The Minister of State, Department for Education (Sarah Teather): This Government are a proud signatory of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), are committed to its implementation, and believe it is vital that children and young people have a strong, independent advocate to champion their interests and views and promote their rights. That is why on 12 July this year the Secretary of State for Education invited Dr John Dunford to undertake an independent review of the Children's Commissioner for England. Today the Government publish his report and recommendations, which I welcome. I know this is an issue of great interest to many parliamentarians, and I have placed a copy of the report in the House Library.

In summary, Dr Dunford has concluded that there is a need for a Children's Commissioner if Government are to meet their commitment to implement the UNCRC. He recommends a strengthened remit to promote and protect children's rights, with the role incorporating the responsibilities of the children's rights director at the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and also being able to assess the impact of new Government policies on children's rights. Dr Dunford recommends greater independence, with the commissioner submitting an annual report, and any other reports, direct to Parliament as well as to Government, rather than reports being submitted to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Education, as at present. It will be for Parliament to determine how else it would like to engage with the new Children's Commissioner. The full implications of Dr Dunford's recommendations will take some months to work through, but the Secretary of State and I are pleased to accept them now in principle and will consult in due course on legislative changes.

Dr Dunford was asked to consider the commissioner's powers, remit and functions, the relationship with other Government funded organisations carrying out related functions and value for money. He has carried out a thorough review of the evidence, for which I am grateful. His call for evidence attracted over 200 responses from adult organisations and individuals and over 700 responses from children and young people. He has held extensive discussions with organisations that work with and for children and young people, MPs and peers, and the children's rights director's office. He has also visited the Children's Commissioners in all four countries of the UK and Ireland, and commissioned an academic review of the international evidence.

The conclusions that Dr Dunford has drawn are powerful. His review makes a convincing argument for the need for a Children's Commissioner, and I accept that without one there would be significant implications for children's lives and for the UK's international standing. Dr Dunford has assessed whether the role of the Children's Commissioner meets the Cabinet Office tests against which all arm's length bodies have been reviewed, and I accept his view that it does so.

I have noted that despite some achievements on specific issues, the impact of the Office of the Children's Commissioner to date shows a clear need to reform its remit and operating model. I accept Dr Dunford's proposals that the role should be in accordance with the United Nation's Paris Principles for Human Rights organisations, with responsibility for promoting and protecting children's rights on the basis of the UNCRC, and reporting directly to Parliament as well as to the Department for Education. I also agree with Dr Dunford that within these rights lies the responsibility for children to respect the rights of others, and that this should better enable children to act as young citizens and reinforces the proper exercise of authority by parents and other adults such as teachers.

The Secretary of State is clear that the Children's Commissioner must represent value for money in exercising its powers and functions, and Dr Dunford has identified opportunities in this regard. While accepting that the commissioner needs to be adequately resourced to fulfil the role, I believe that all public funding should be used in accordance with the Cabinet Office's efficiency guidelines for arm's length bodies, and that this need not compromise independence or statutory powers and duties. Dr Dunford recommends merging the functions of the Office of the Children's Commissioner with the children's rights director in Ofsted, providing the opportunity for greater coherence and impact, and scope for savings. I believe that this is a sensible way forward, and will be discussing next steps with Her Majesty's chief inspector. Dr Dunford has also identified that the salary of the Children's Commissioner is excessive in comparison to others in similar roles and I will address this in setting up the new arrangements.

Dr Dunford's recommendations mean that the statutory basis and form of the Office of the Children's Commissioner must change. I will consult in due course on legislative changes. In the interim, the current role and functions of the Children's Commissioner will continue. This includes the commissioner's remit over non-devolved matters impacting on children and young people in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. I do understand the difficulties that the current position presents for the Children's Commissioners in the devolved Administrations. I will want to work with them to achieve a situation, within the devolution settlements, where the interests of children in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland can be fully represented by the commissioner for that jurisdiction.

While it will take some time for any legislative changes to take effect, I am determined to act in the spirit of Dr Dunford's recommendations as soon as possible. The Secretary of State does not intend to use his current power to direct the Children's Commissioner to undertake an inquiry, and while the current legislation will still mean that the commissioner needs to consult him prior to undertaking an inquiry, the Secretary of State will be happy to offer his views but will not expect to have any role in how the commissioner then decides to proceed.

Dr Dunford recommends that a reshaped Children's Commissioner for England holds Government to account against the UNCRC. I agree with Dr Dunford that for this to deliver benefits to children, Government and policy makers must be receptive to that approach and advice. I can therefore make a clear commitment that the Government will give due consideration to the UNCRC articles when making new policy and legislation. In doing so, we will always consider the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's recommendations but recognise that, like other state signatories, the UK Government and the UN committee may at times disagree on what compliance with certain articles entails.

In conclusion, Dr Dunford's recommendations should result in a Children's Commissioner that has greater profile and credibility, and can better impact on children's lives. At the centre of this coalition Government's thinking is a determination to see children and young people achieve to their full potential, and the desire to empower individuals to shape their own future. I believe that reinforcing our commitment to children's rights, and creating a stronger independent advocate for those rights, is an important part of delivering on that ambition.

Childhood (Commercialisation and Sexualisation)

The Minister of State, Department for Education (Sarah Teather): I am announcing today an independent review of the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood.

Parents express real concern about children being pressured into growing up too quickly, to become consumers or sexualised adults earlier than is appropriate. The Government have therefore made a commitment to take action to protect children from excessive commercialisation and premature sexualisation.

I have asked Mr Reg Bailey, chief executive of the Mothers' Union, to conduct an independent review of the issue and to make a full report with recommendations in May 2011. I should like the review to take a wide-ranging and independent examination of the evidence and provide recommendations that identify measures that will result in businesses collectively and individually changing their behaviour and which empower consumers to voice their concerns more effectively. To that end, I have asked Mr Bailey to consider the views of both consumers, particularly parents but also children themselves, and the business community; as well as drawing on the expertise of existing regulators and other experts in the field.

In undertaking his review, I have also asked Mr Bailey to build on the previous reviews conducted by Professor David Buckingham on the impact of the commercial world on children's wellbeing, by Dr Linda Papadopoulos on the sexualisation of young people, and by Professor Tanya Byron on child safety in a digital world. I have asked Mr Bailey to examine the evidence in these reviews and more recent research and to produce robust and challenging recommendations for Government to consider in the following areas:

Risks of harm of commercialisation and sexualisation and barriers to parenting;

Principles (what is acceptable in this area and what is not);

Consumer voice; and

Corporate social responsibility relating to children.

Copies of the Minister of State for Children and Families' letter asking Mr Bailey to carry out the review will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

TRANSPORT

Ship-to-Ship Transfer Regulations

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mike Penning): I wish to inform the House of the outcome of the review of the Merchant Shipping (Ship-to-Ship Transfers) Regulations 2010.

On 8 July, I announced the review of the regulations and I asked all interested parties to make representations to me by 30 September. On the same day, I also laid a statutory instrument—the Merchant Shipping (Ship-to-Ship Transfer) (Amendment) Regulations 2010—before the House, in order to defer the coming into force date of the regulations from 1 October 2010 until 1 April 2011.

During the period of the review, from 8 July to 30 September inclusive, I received 32 written representations and held three meetings with interested parties at their request.

In considering these representations, I have been left in no doubt that this is an important issue—not only for the shipping companies who benefit from these practices, but equally for local residents who have concerns about the potential impact of any accident on their coastline. In deciding how best to proceed, it has been necessary to strike a balance between ensuring that these operations are properly regulated, while recognising the benefits of ship-to-ship transfer.

On the basis of the written representations and the points made to me in meetings conducted in the context of the review, I have drawn the following conclusions:

I intend to change the policy on ship-to-ship transfers outside harbour authority areas. Instead of a general prohibition, there will be a regime which will:

restrict ship-to-ship transfers outside harbour authority areas to a single designated area within the UK territorial sea;

establish a system of permits issued by the MCA; and

give effect at the same time to the new chapter 8 of annex I to the MARPOL convention.

I intend to maintain, without change, the policy of requiring oil transfer licences for harbour authorities. Harbour authorities which already have a history of hosting ship-to-ship transfers will, of course, continue to benefit from transitional arrangements.

I shall also take account, in reshaping the policy, of some specific instances where a type of ship or a type of activity needs to be treated in a way which departs from the general rules, or where the application of the rules needs to be adjusted to allow normal harbour activities to continue unhindered.

The Department's officials will now proceed to draft the necessary amending legislation, on the basis which I have described. I shall be taking a keen interest in the progress which they make.

I will be placing an analytical table, which summarises the points of substance made in the written representations and the meetings held with interested parties, on the Department's website and in the Libraries of both Houses.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Disability Living Allowance Reform

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Maria Miller): I am publishing today "Disability Living Allowance reform", a formal public consultation on our proposed reforms to disability living allowance (DLA).

We are already undertaking large-scale reform of the welfare system, for example the universal credit and our flagship Work programme. Our welfare reforms are designed to protect people in the most vulnerable situations, including disabled people. We remain steadfast in our support for the principles of DLA, as a non-means-tested cash benefit contributing to the extra costs incurred by disabled people.

However, DLA has not been fundamentally reformed since it was introduced in 1992. We now have a disability benefit which is confusing for individuals to understand, based on unclear criteria and often results in inconsistent awards, and since 1992, both the case load and the cost of DLA have grown to a level that is unsustainable. Changes to DLA are long overdue and must address questions of fairness and value, while supporting disabled people to lead independent lives. We must ensure DLA better reflects the needs of disabled people today, rather than in the 1990s, and that it enables support to be targeted to those with the greatest need.

This is why I want to bring disability benefits into the 21st century by replacing DLA with a new benefit—personal independence payment. This is an opportunity to improve the support for disabled people and enable them to lead full, active and independent lives. Personal independence payment will maintain the key principles of DLA, but it will be delivered in a fairer, more consistent and sustainable manner. It is only right that support should be targeted at those disabled people who face the greatest challenges to leading independent lives and this reform is required to enable that, along with a clearer assessment process.

The consultation document sets out our proposals and seeks responses from disabled people and disability organisations. The document covers:

> The need for reform, including the rising case load and expenditure and what we believe is wrong with the current benefit;
>
> Our proposals for reform including the new objective assessment, taking into account aids and adaptations, eligibility criteria, the treatment of children and over 65s, and signposting claimants to support to help them manage their condition; and
>
> How we envisage the benefit being delivered, including the benefit's role as a passport to other support and integration with other support, such as adult social care.

We welcome views from across Great Britain on the DLA proposals, conceived within the framework of a 21st century welfare system that is efficient, effective and above all fair.

Copies of the consultation paper are available in the Vote Office, and will be available shortly at http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/menu/cmd2010.htm.

The consultation period will be from 6 December to 14 February 2011. I will make a further statement regarding the response shortly after the consultation period ends.

Social Fund Budgeting Loans

The Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Steve Webb): The social fund helps people to meet additional costs they may find it difficult to budget for. This is especially true when people on the lowest incomes are facing difficult and expensive times in their lives such as having a child or paying for a relative's funeral.

This is why, in the forthcoming Welfare Reform Bill, we will introduce legislation to make social fund budgeting loans available to help families to buy maternity items or items for a new baby or to help them towards meeting some of the costs of a relative's funeral. This help will be available in addition to the Sure Start maternity grant and the social fund funeral payment from late next year.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 7 December 2010

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (Mr Edward Vaizey): A meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council was held on 18 and 19 November. The UK was represented by the Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU, Andy Lebrecht, for the culture and audiovisual section of the Council. The Minister for Sport and the Olympics represented the UK for the sports section.

Culture and Audiovisual section

The presidency presented a progress report on the Commission proposal for a European heritage label. The presidency updated the Council on the negotiations of the proposal. The majority of the main points of discussion raised during the negotiations have been resolved. The scheme will be open to all member states on a voluntary basis; third countries will be allowed to participate in the scheme only as part of transnational sites; the selection of sites will take place every two years; and sites awarded the label under the current intergovernmental scheme will need to reapply and be subject to the same criteria and procedures as new sites being proposed. Two points, however, remain at issue: where the funds allocated to the action for 2013 are to come from and which institution is to be competent to award, and if necessary withdraw, the label. On the first point, the Commission proposal states that the 2013 budget would come from the margins of the EU budget and the majority of delegations have supported this view.

The Government, however, oppose this view and believe that the 2013 budget should come from existing programmes. On the second point, the Commission proposes that it would be the institution with the authority to decide which sites are to be awarded the label, or if necessary have it withdrawn. Some delegations would prefer the decision to be taken by the Council. The presidency has suggested that the decision to award or withdraw the label be taken by the Commission following an advisory committee procedure to allow member states to have a say before the Commission reaches a decision. These two points will continue to be negotiated under the Hungarian presidency.

The Council designated Mons in Belgium as one of the two European capitals of culture 2015. The second capital for 2015 in the Czech Republic, Pilsen, will be designated at the next Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council in May 2011.

The Council adopted conclusions setting out the EU work plan for culture for the years 2011 to 2014. The plan addresses the following priorities: cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and accessible and inclusive culture; cultural and creative industries; skills and mobility; cultural heritage, including mobility of collections; culture in external relations; and culture statistics. These priorities will be implemented through the open method of co-ordination, working groups with member states' experts, and a reinforced dialogue with civil society.

The Council adopted conclusions on the role of culture in combating poverty and social exclusion. The conclusions argue that it is important for a cultural dimension to be incorporated into policies against poverty and social exclusion. Participation in cultural life and arts education can play a significant role in the fight against poverty by encouraging social inclusion of isolated groups and promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue.

The Council adopted conclusions on European film heritage, including on challenges of the digital era. The text addresses two issues: the transition from the analogue to the digital era and the link between film funding policies and film heritage.

The Council adopted conclusions on the opportunities and challenges for European cinema in the digital era. The conclusions underline that the transition to digital cinema is urgent and that it should be supported by public policies. The conclusions also welcome Commission plans to provide funding through the media programme before the end of 2010 to support digitisation. The four sets of conclusions were adopted without further debate.

The Council then discussed the cultural and audiovisual aspects of the digital agenda, the first so-called flagship initiative under the "Europe 2020" strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The digital agenda, endorsed by the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council of 31 May, aims to deliver sustainable economic and social benefits from a digital single market based on fast and ultra-fast internet and interoperable applications. Delegations underscored that the cultural and audiovisual dimensions of the digital agenda are crucial if it is to deliver sustainable economic and social benefits from a digital single market. As priority actions, Ministers singled out the digitisation of cultural heritage and of cinema as well as the development and sustainable financing of Europeana, the European digital library. In addition, delegations stressed the importance of increasing legal access to cultural and creative content online and of intellectual property rights in this respect. Finally, many highlighted that media literacy levels need to be improved so as to enable citizens to fully benefit from a digital single market. All Ministers underlined that the cross-cutting nature of the digital agenda requires an integrated, rather than a compartmentalised approach and horizontal co-ordination between institutions concerned at EU and at national level.

Sports Section

The Council adopted a resolution establishing a high-level structured dialogue with sport stakeholders. Such a dialogue will allow an ongoing exchange of views on priorities, implementation and follow-up to EU co-operation in the field of sport. It will take the form of a regular informal meeting of leading representatives of the EU public authorities and the sports movement to discuss sporting issues in the EU. The first such meeting is scheduled for early December. The UK's views on the importance of ensuring that national sport voices are part of this group were taken into account.

The Council adopted conclusions on the role of the EU in the international fight against doping.

The conclusions reiterate the need to co-ordinate EU and member state positions ahead of meetings of the World Anti-Doping Agency, in particular in relation to the EU acquis, for example on the free movement of athletes and the protection of privacy and personal data. Such EU co-ordination should take place in close co-operation with the Council of Europe.

The Council adopted conclusions on the role of sport as a source of and a driver for active social inclusion. The conclusions identify three common priorities for promoting social inclusion through sport: the accessibility of sport activity for all citizens ("sport for all" principle), better use of the potential of sport as a contribution to community building, social cohesion and growth, and transnational exchanges of strategies and methodologies.

The Council held a policy debate on social inclusion in and through sport. Ministers underlined that sport is an activity that can bring people together and be a powerful tool to strengthen cohesion in European societies, with professional athletes being role models for society. They mentioned that relevant activities in their countries were targeted at youth, elderly, those with disabilities and those from disadvantaged and migrant communities. Delegations specially requested that exchanges of experience and of best practices be among the priorities of EU action in the field of sport. Several delegations advocated that a future EU programme in the area of sports should support volunteering, especially of those with a migrant background, as well as improvements in sports infrastructures. The UK intervened to ask that future work at EU level demonstrates clear value over national responsibilities, specifically building better evidence on how major international sporting events can be translated into lasting participation and further encouragement for professional sports to play their part in boosting participation.

Under any other business, the Hungarian delegation outlined the priorities for their forthcoming presidency. Under culture and audiovisual, priorities would be the adoption of the European Heritage Label, the cultural dimension of the EU2020 strategy, the mobility of artists and creative content online. For sport their presidency focus would be on the framework for EU activity in sport, and also the EU sports programme.

EDUCATION

Myplace Programme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education (Tim Loughton): I am today announcing confirmation of capital funding for youth facilities planned under the myplace programme. I will be looking to projects funded through myplace to make the very most of the resources they are receiving.

I expect projects to use this investment to drive reform of local youth provision and take every opportunity to promote young people's positive and active role in society. I would like to see civil society organisations delivering more local publicly funded services, and once construction is complete I would expect local authority-led projects to transfer or share ownership and management with the local community and with young people. In line with our plans for the early intervention grant, I will also expect projects to focus strongly on evidence-based early interventions for the most vulnerable young people.

I want to see Government capital investment working harder to leverage ongoing additional investment including from the private sector. I have seen the extent to which the local business community and volunteers have engaged with some projects. I believe that many others could use the opportunity of a new high-quality youth facility to develop strong relationships that mean their long-term viability is rooted far more within their communities, rather than projects relying exclusively on public funds. I have instructed the Big Lottery Fund, who manage the programme on the Department's behalf, to ensure that each project has reviewed its revenue funding plans to assure sustainability, before final approval is given.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Student Immigration System

The Minister for Immigration (Damian Green): The Government have committed to making changes across the immigration system to achieve their overall aim of reducing net migration. The student route accounts for two thirds of migrants entering the UK each year which makes it a key focus for reform.

Therefore, the Government are today launching a consultation on the reform of the student immigration system.

The UK's education system is world renowned, and we remain the global destination of choice for the many thousands of higher education students who choose to study abroad each year. We want to encourage all those genuine students coming here to study at our world class academic institutions.

At the same time the Government want to ensure that those who enter on a student visa genuinely come here to study. The Government are committed to minimising abuse of the student route by those whose primary motivation is not to study but to work and settle in the UK.

By minimising abuse, we shall also take a further step towards our aim of reducing net migration to the UK to sustainable levels. The majority of non-EU migrants are students. They, and their dependants, accounted for around two thirds of visas issued last year under the points-based system. It is clear that the Government's aim to reduce net migration will not be achieved without careful consideration and action on the non-economic routes including students.

The proposals in our consultation aim to build on recent changes to the points-based system, which we believe offers a transparent and flexible framework but which needs further strengthening. They are grouped under the following broad aims which we expect our reforms to achieve:

raising the level of courses students can study, with only highly trusted sponsors able to offer courses to adult students below degree level;

introducing tougher entry criteria for adult students;

ensuring students return overseas after their course;

limiting the entitlements to work and to sponsor dependants;

simpler procedures for checking low-risk applications; and

stricter accreditation procedures for education providers in the private sector.

We want to hear views on our proposals from a wide range of people. The consultation will run for eight weeks until 31 January. This is shorter than a standard 12-week consultation so that the policy can be announced in advance of the next academic year.

The consultation document will be available on the UK Border Agency website and copies will also be available in the Libraries of both Houses.

JUSTICE

Public Guardian Board (Annual Report)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Mr Jonathan Djanogly): The Public Guardian Board has provided me with a copy of their annual report on the public guardian for the year 2010. A copy of the report is available in the Libraries of both Houses, the Vote Office and the Printed Paper Office.

Copies of the report are also available on the intranet: http://www.publicguardian.gov.uk/about/statutory-documents.htm.

TRANSPORT

Rail Industry Review

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Philip Hammond): This Government are determined to secure a sustainable and efficient railway. The spending review settlement has demonstrated our commitment to rail transport. The sustained financial support we have offered now needs to be matched by a relentless drive for efficiency on the part of the industry.

Sir Roy McNulty's value for money review has reached some important interim conclusions. In his interim report being published today and being made available in the Library of the House he finds that:

the railway is costing more than it used to and more than it ought to. Greater efficiency would realise savings of £600 million—£1,000 million per annum by 2018-19 without cutting services or lowering quality;

the key to securing these efficiencies is a cross-industry focus on reducing costs and improving value for money;

that in turn demands closer working and alignment of incentives between train operators and Network Rail and strong leadership across the industry. Inevitably, such alignment, if it is to be effective, will involve Network Rail working more closely at a local level with train operators.

The most pressing need is to ensure that incentives across the industry are aligned, so that all parties strive to improve the quality of services and to provide value for money for taxpayers and passengers. Train operators are too narrowly focused on franchise specifications (which are often over-detailed). Network Rail has concentrated on network performance and safety targets. These are important objectives. But there is no cross-industry focus on the fundamental purpose of the railway—moving people and goods efficiently across a network while securing the best long-term value for money for farepayers and taxpayers.

The second phase of the value for money study will focus on identifying opportunities for greater alignment and changes that will secure greater efficiency and better value for money. Sir Roy's final report is due to be published in April 2011. These initial conclusions, however, are so important that it would be wrong to wait until then before starting to respond.

Today, I am announcing the establishment of a high-level group, which I will chair, that will examine the options for getting those responsible for track and train to work together to drive down the cost of the railway for the benefit of passengers and taxpayers, while improving the quality of services. Sir Roy McNulty's final report will inform the group's work.

This group will consider options for structural reform in the industry. My presumption is that, at an operational level, there are some network-wide planning and technical functions which can only be discharged by a single national body, acting as custodian of the network. That should not preclude reforms which allow route or area-based alliances to be established, focused on aligning specific track and train operations where this best serves the needs of customers.

I am clear, however, that no changes should be made that would jeopardise the impressive improvements in safety and punctuality achieved across the industry in recent years. There is a spectrum of options which could contribute to achieving a better alignment of incentives. We expect that the optimal solution will vary for different parts of the network, reflecting the diversity of our railways and differing local needs. A one-size-fits-all model is unlikely to be the right solution. I am also clear that the changes we are proposing must protect the interests of freight operators on the network.

I envisage that this work will lead to the publication of proposals for industry reform by November 2011—as set out in my Department's business plan.

In parallel with the value for money review, my Department has been consulting on possible changes to the franchising system. We have invited views on moving to longer franchises with less detailed specifications and greater incentives for operators to act efficiently and invest in the improvements passengers want. These principles have been widely welcomed and they will form part of our plans for making the railway more efficient and more responsive to passengers' needs.

However, franchising reform needs to be co-ordinated with Network Rail reform: they are two sides of the same coin. We also need to co-ordinate the programme of franchise renewals to take account of major planned railway projects which will inevitably disrupt operations in certain franchises.

A number of franchises will fall due for re-tendering over the next couple of years. Because we intend, typically, to let longer franchises of at least 15 years duration it is important that the reforms we wish to make following the McNulty review, the franchise consultation and the work of the high-level group are incorporated into the terms of these franchises.

I therefore propose to use a short contract, openly competed during 2011, to run and improve services in the Greater Anglia franchise while we carry out this work. I then expect to award a new long-term franchise for the operation of services in East Anglia to commence in 2013. In 2012, I propose to award a franchise to operate InterCity west coast until the planned opening of HS2 in 2026. Then, in late 2012, I propose to award a franchise of 15 years to operate the east coast main line services.

The rest of the retendering programme for 2012 and 2013 will depend partly on decisions by my Department and existing operators on the termination dates of current franchises. We also need to avoid overloading the industry by inviting too many tenders at the same time. The trans-Pennine express franchise could contractually be extended by up to five years beyond 2012: my Department is discussing a proposal for an extension with the current operator. Alternatively, this franchise could be retendered for at least 15 years, possibly in 2013 alongside the northern franchise. The Essex Thameside franchise will also be retendered by 2013 for at least 15 years. The Greater Western franchise will be retendered in either 2013 or 2016, again for at least 15 years, upon expiry of the existing franchise agreement in accordance with its terms. In the case of Thameslink and South Eastern it is not currently appropriate to let long-term franchises, since both will be heavily affected by Thameslink work at London Bridge station. So these franchises will be retendered on a short-term interim basis as they fall due. My Department will then let long-term franchises to cover the operation of Thameslink and South Eastern services, once the London Bridge station reconstruction is complete.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 8 December 2010

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Higher Education Funding and Student Finance

The Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (Vince Cable): I am today announcing further improvements to the proposed package of reforms to higher education funding and student finance in England.

Our proposed reforms were announced by the Minister for Universities and Science on 3 November. They will introduce a significantly fairer and more progressive new system in which no eligible student has to pay upfront fees, there is a better deal for students while they are studying, and a fairer system of repayments for those who have completed their studies and are realising the benefits of a university education.

Since that announcement, we have continued to discuss the proposals in detail with Members of Parliament, universities, students and other stakeholders. In the light of those discussions, we have decided to make three further enhancements to the package to ensure that the package is as progressive as we can make it for full-time students, while at the same time providing better support for part-time students.

First, the proposals announced on 3 November already make significant steps to improve the support available for part-time students. For the first time, eligible part-time students would qualify for loan support for their tuition costs on the same basis as full-time students. These changes have been welcomed by many as a critical measure in redressing long-standing discrimination against part-time students. However, discussion with the higher education sector has highlighted that the proposed threshold of 33% intensity for full loan entitlement may inadvertently deprive a significant number of learners from receiving support. We therefore propose that the level of intensity be reduced to 25%—that is, any eligible student studying for more than a quarter of their time will be eligible for full loan support for their tuition costs. This will better reflect the way that many part-time courses are structured.

Secondly, we have been keen to ensure that there is adequate protection for lower earning graduates in our new system. One critical component of this protection is the income threshold at which graduates start repaying, and the way that threshold is then uprated in future years. As announced on 3 November, that income threshold will be £21,000 as from 2016, compared with the current threshold of £15,000. Our modelling to date has assumed that that threshold should be uprated every five years in line with earnings. In order to give better protection for those on lower incomes, we now propose that the uprating should instead be made every year. Around a quarter of graduates will be better off in this new, more progressive regime than under the current regime.

Thirdly, we have reviewed the repayment position of students and graduates under the existing student finance system. The current income threshold for repayments was first announced by the previous Government in 2004, and has never since been uprated. The effect is that the value of that threshold has been declining with inflation, with graduates required to start paying at relatively lower levels of income. That is not fair to existing students and graduates. So we have decided that the £15,000 income threshold for those in the existing system should be uprated annually in line with inflation from 2012 to 2016.

These improvements further enhance a reform package which will put higher education funding and student finance on a sustainable footing, improve the quality and viability of our university system, offer more progressive support to those on lower incomes both while studying in higher education and when repaying as graduates, and contribute to paying down the deficit.

DEFENCE

Foreign Affairs Council in Defence Formation

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Andrew Robathan): Please find the agenda of discussion points for the Foreign Affairs Council in Defence Formation on 9 December 2010 detailed below. I am writing as Duty Minister. The Under-Secretary of State with responsibility for international security strategy, my hon. Friend the Member for Aldershot (Mr Howarth), will attend.

Informal meeting with NATO Secretary-General Rasmussen: Ministers will be accompanied by the NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen for an informal discussion of EU-NATO relations. No firm agenda has been released for this session, but it is likely to encompass capability development in the form of "quick win" projects, and ongoing contact between the European Defence Agency and the Allied Command Transformation. The UK's objectives are to welcome the renewed focus on EU/NATO relations under Ashton and Rasmussen and to continue to press for improved co-operation.

Formal working session on military capabilities: This formal discussion of capabilities will follow on from the informal meeting in Ghent in September. Again, no agenda has been issued, but we expect the discussion to concentrate on initiatives for pooling and sharing capabilities, and on bilateral and multilateral co-operation in capability development. This will highlight the UK-France defence agreement. The UK will welcome the continued emphasis on capability development, but resist calls for the creation of any additional institutions or processes.

EDA Steering Board: Ministers will discuss the work programme for 2011, the nomination of the new chief executive, the level playing field, Single European Sky, defence research, and pooling and sharing. The UK will work with the agency and its member states to develop and improve the agency effectiveness and performance, but will urge the EDA to be realistic about its budget requirements. Unless postponed, the EDA budget will be discussed as an agenda item in the Council meeting. On current plans, we intend to oppose any budget increase for the agency in 2011.

Informal working lunch discussing operations: Ministers will be accompanied over lunch by the three EU operational commanders (Op ATALANTA/ Op ALTHEA/ EUTM Somalia) in an informal discussion of progress. Some member states will also wish to discuss possible future operations, likely to focus on the Sahel and the Sudan. The UK supports the ongoing operations, and will stress the urgency of developing an internationally recognised strategy for Somalia.

Taskforce on the Military Covenant

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Andrew Robathan): In July the Prime Minister asked Professor Hew Strachan of Oxford University to lead an independent taskforce to develop innovative ideas to help rebuild the military covenant.

His report, published today, looks at support that can be provided across Government and throughout society and makes many recommendations for the Government to consider. A copy of the taskforce report will be placed in the Library of the House.

I will publish a full response to this report's recommendations on behalf of the Government in spring 2011. However, we intend to take forward work on two of the report's recommendations in advance of that. The first is for an armed forces community covenant, which will encourage communities across the UK to volunteer support for their local armed forces. The second is for a chief of defence staff commendation scheme, which will allow the head of the UK's armed forces to thank individuals or bodies who give exceptional support to our armed forces.

The Government are very grateful to Professor Strachan and his team for their contribution to rebuilding the military covenant.

HEALTH

"Valuing People Now: Summary Report March 2009 - September 2010"

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Paul Burstow): I am today publishing the "Valuing People Now: Summary Report March 2009 - September 2010" along with the easy read summary and good practice examples.

The report includes findings from all the 152 learning disability partnership board self-assessments in 2009-10. It shows that good progress has been made in improving outcomes for people with learning disabilities and their family carers over the 18 months to September 2010. It includes many examples of good practice which show how to drive forward efficiencies while improving the lives of individuals.

We know that there is still more to do to ensure that the Government's vision of equity and excellence and personalised services delivers for all people with learning disabilities.

Achieving genuine equality and tackling disadvantage requires continued engagement across the health and social care system and across the community and voluntary sector in the three priority areas of health, housing and employment to improve outcomes for people with learning disabilities and their families.

Today's publications have been placed in the Library. Copies of the summary report are available to hon. Members from the Vote Office and for noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office.

HOME DEPARTMENT

CRB Independent Complaint Monitor (Annual Report)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Lynne Featherstone): The 2009-10 Independent Complaints Monitor annual report for the Criminal Records Bureau has been published today. It is available on the CRB website and a copy has been placed in the House Library.

Drug Strategy

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (James Brokenshire): I am pleased to announce that we are today publishing the cross-Government drug strategy "Reducing Demand, Restricting Supply, Building Recovery—Supporting People to live a Drug Free Life". The strategy sets out a fundamentally different approach to preventing drug use in our communities and in supporting recovery from drug and alcohol dependence.

In a major change to Government policy, the strategy puts recovery at the heart of our response, with more responsibility on individuals to seek help and overcome their dependency. The strategy sets out a more holistic approach to supporting people dependent on drugs or alcohol, not just through treatment, but also by addressing offending, employment and housing issues, all of which are critical to overcoming drug or alcohol abuse.

This is an ambitious strategy aimed at reducing demand. It takes an uncompromising approach to cracking down on those involved in drug supply, both at home and abroad. There will be renewed focus on seizing the assets of those involved in the drugs trade and we will strengthen our ability to respond swiftly to so-called "legal highs".

Power and accountability to tackle drugs and the harms they cause will be passed to local areas. With the introduction of police and crime commissioners, the reform of the NHS and the creation of Public Health England, local partnerships will be responsible for designing and commissioning services that meet the needs of their communities.

We received over 1,800 responses to the targeted consultation held over the summer and we are grateful to all those who responded and, in doing so, supported the development of this strategy.

The drug strategy will be available on the Home Office website and will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Foreign Affairs Council (Development Ministers)

The Secretary of State for International Development (Mr Andrew Mitchell): The Foreign Affairs Council (Development) will meet in Brussels on 9 December. The meeting will be chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security, and Vice-President of the European Commission, Baroness Ashton.

Due to priority parliamentary business that day, I regret that my ministerial colleagues and I will not be able to attend. The UK will be represented by the UK's Permanent Representative to the EU (Kim Darroch). The expected agenda items are as follows:

Green Paper on EU development policy in support of inclusive growth and sustainable development—Increasing the impact of EU development co-operation.

There will be an initial discussion on the main issues presented in the Commission's recent Green Paper on inclusive growth and sustainable development. This wide-ranging paper is currently the subject of a public consultation. Discussion topics include governance, security and fragility, the co-ordination of aid, budget support, growth, regional integration, climate change and biodiversity, energy and development and agriculture and food security. This is a welcome initiative and a chance to put forward our broader views on the future of EU development policy, albeit with a specific focus on growth.

Afghanistan

EU Special Representative to Afghanistan, Ambassador Usackas, will give a report and update the Council about the latest situation in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a key UK development priority and we look forward to a productive discussion about how best to co-ordinate efforts in the context of the EU action plan on Afghanistan and the Kabul conference. Afghanistan is also on the agenda for Foreign Ministers at the Foreign Affairs Council on 13 December.

Haiti

Given the desperate humanitarian crisis in Haiti, and the recent cholera outbreak, this discussion will focus on how to best deliver support to the Haitian people. This is particularly poignant as we are approaching the first anniversary of the Haitian earthquake on 12 January. The post-earthquake humanitarian support provided by the UK has funded vital work by UN agencies and international NGOs, and helped to provide 380,000 people with food, clean water and medical care.

In response to the cholera crisis I have announced additional help to supply clean water and improve sanitation and hygiene for up to 340,000 people in the north of the country. UK support will also bring in emergency supplies and more than a thousand trained medical practitioners to staff up to 12 major cholera treatment centres and 60 subsidiary cholera treatment units, capable of treating several thousands of cholera victims over the next two months and helping to stop the outbreak spreading across the region.

Mutual Accountability and Transparency

My Swedish counterpart will lead a discussion focused on transparency as a prerequisite for better accountability and more effective development results. This is a UK priority, and we are working hard to encourage other EU member states to agree steps to improve transparency and to ensure EU aid information is published in comprehensive, accessible and comparable ways. We are also working towards an international standard in aid transparency, which will help us to bring aid information closer to user needs as well as meeting our international transparency commitments. We are also supportive of work to encourage greater accountability between those receiving and those providing aid, and their respective citizens.

Innovative Financing Mechanism

The High Representative and Belgian presidency will lead a broad discussion about innovative forms of development financing. The UK is supportive of exploring new innovative finance mechanisms, while emphasising that these should complement, and not deflect from, commitments made by member states to meet agreed targets of 0.7% of GNI for official development assistance by 2015.

International Development Conferences in 2011

The Council will have a first discussion of the key issues to be tackled in two important conferences in 2011.

The least developed countries (LDC) summit will take place in Istanbul from 30 May to 3 June 2011, under the Hungarian EU presidency. We are keen to ensure the outcome of the summit builds on the 2010-15 action agenda agreed at the UN MDG summit in New York in September 2010.

The fourth high-level forum on aid effectiveness will take place in Busan, Korea from 29 November to 1 December 2011 under the Polish EU presidency. The UK is looking forward to working closely with our EU partners in the lead up to the forum, including on strengthening the emphasis on results, value for money, transparency and accountability.

EU-US Summit

The High Representative will report back on the development discussions that took place at the EU-US summit in Lisbon on 20 November 2010. In the summit statement, the EU and US pledged to continue and strengthen co-operation on food security, climate change and the millennium development goals, including health. Discussions will continue through the EU-US dialogue on development and the UK is supportive of this process.

TRANSPORT

Maritime Industry and Light Dues

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mike Penning): I am today announcing a package of measures relating to the maritime industry following the spending review and a recent review I have undertaken of light dues.

Shipping is important to the UK both as the means by which the majority of goods are moved in and out of the country and as a significant contributor to the UK economy in its own right. The Government therefore wish to see a strong and sustainable maritime sector for the future and to minimise the burdens the industry faces.

With this in mind, the Government have listened carefully to the views of both the shipping industry and the general lighthouse authorities on the need for stability in the future level of charges set by the Department for Transport for marine aids to navigation.

In my written ministerial statement of 26 July 2010, *Official Report*, columns 75-76WS, on marine aids to navigation, I announced that the Government do not intend to change the basis on which light dues are currently charged. I am now pleased to announce a commitment that there will be no increases in light dues for at least the next three years.

I am also inviting the views of the Lights Finance Committee, which includes representatives of the payers of light dues, on what an appropriate level of dues for the future would be that balances the need to reduce demands on the shipping industry with the need to maintain essential aids to navigation. I have asked the committee to report its conclusions to me by February 2011.

Sustainable economic growth also requires investment in training and skills. I am therefore also pleased to be able to announce that, despite the difficult public spending climate, the Government will continue to provide a partial financial contribution towards the cost of training seafarers under the existing support for maritime training scheme, with the remainder of those costs being met by employers.

Within its spending review settlement the Department for Transport has been able to allocate some £12 million to support maritime training in the next financial year. I intend that the majority of this money should be focused on supporting initial training for cadets studying at junior officer level (SMarT 1). I estimate that this will enable the Department to contribute to the training of up to 1,000 new cadets starting their training during the next academic year. In order to provide reassurance, I can also confirm that we will make funding available beyond next year for all cadets starting SMarT 1 training in 2011-12, and those already undergoing SMarT 1 training, for the duration of their studies to officer of the watch certificate.

In addition, I intend that funding should also remain available next year for ratings training and for ratings to officer conversion training and I anticipate that some funding should be available to support the first instalment of SMarT 2—helping those SMarT 1 officer cadets who are also working towards foundation and other degrees, higher national diplomas or Scottish diplomas to complete their studies.

For the remaining parts of the SMarT programme, including SMarT 2 training beyond the first instalment, the Government believe that in current circumstances it is more appropriate that the cost of this additional training should be met in full by employers.

During the year I intend to commission a review of the support for maritime training scheme to consider the continuing requirement for Government support for training and skills development in this sector and how best to spend any continuing Government funding. I will report back to the House on the terms of reference for the review in due course.

In current fiscal circumstances, the Government have also had to look hard at other areas of taxpayer support to shipping.

The current crew relief costs scheme (CRCS) provides limited financial assistance to shipping companies towards the cost of officers or ratings joining or leaving their ships abroad. Shipping companies gain many benefits from the employment of British officers and ratings and, in light of this, the Government have come to the conclusion that continuing to provide commercial shipping companies with a subsidy to meet part of the costs of fares for seafarers can no longer be justified. The current CRCS will therefore cease on 8 March 2011. However, under the Merchant Shipping Act, the Secretary of State, with the consent of the Treasury, will still be able to provide financial assistance in respect of travel and other costs in exceptional cases. I am also inviting those with an interest in CRCS to submit suggestions for how the Department may be able to provide non-monetary assistance to encourage the continued employment of UK seafarers.

The Department for Transport also currently provides a financial contribution towards the costs of the confidential hazardous incident reporting programme for shipping (CHIRP) which provides an outlet for mariners to voice safety concerns. However, the scheme has not gained the traction hoped for in the commercial shipping and fishing sectors and there are other services established by the industry such as the Nautical Institute's mariners' alerting and reporting scheme. I have therefore concluded that the Department should cease to provide financial support for this scheme at the end of this financial year. The Department will work closely with the commercial, fishing and recreational sectors to see how confidential reporting opportunities might be provided in the future without financial assistance from Government.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 9 December 2010

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

EU Competitiveness Council (Pre-Council Statement)

The Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Mr Mark Prisk): My noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, (Baroness Wilcox), has today made the following statement:

"The EU Competitiveness Council will take place in Brussels on 10 December 2010. I shall represent the UK on industry and internal market issues and Andy Lebrecht, the UK's Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU will represent the UK when I am not in attendance.

The main agenda items will include the proposed adoption of two sets of Council conclusions: one on the Single Market Act and one on the EU framework for betting and gambling. There will be an exchange of views on the EU patent to consider the way forward and possible enhanced co-operation process. There will also be a ministerial lunchtime discussion on the use of EU impact assessments in the EU institutions to support the development of EU legislation. A proposed regulation on EU state aid to support the closure of coal mines in the EU and the adoption of Council conclusions on EU industrial policy will also be discussed.

The following items will be taken under any other business:

Presidency information on transposition of EU directives into national law;

Commission information on implementation and mutual evaluation of the EU services directive;

Commission information on the proposed EU consumer rights directive;

Commission information on the EU consumer market scoreboard;

The Government's main aims will be to:

To agree Council conclusions on the Single Market Act.

Support progress on the EU patent.

Endorse Council conclusions on an EU framework for gambling and betting in member states.

Support the importance of impact assessments in the EU institutions to support EU decision making.

Accept the proposal on EU state aid for coal mines closure.

Agree Council conclusions on EU industrial policy."

TREASURY

Anti-Avoidance: Disguised Remuneration

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): Following the written ministerial statement on 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 1WS, and as announced at the June Budget, the Government are introducing legislation to tackle arrangements involving trusts or other vehicles used to reward employees which seek to avoid or defer the payment of income tax or National Insurance Contributions (NICs). The arrangements covered include the provision of a tax-advantaged alternative to saving beyond the annual and lifetime allowances available in a registered pension scheme. In many cases, these third-party arrangements allow an employee to enjoy the full benefit of a sum of money paid or assets provided while arguing that, because of the structure of the arrangements, there is no legal right to the money or assets. This argument is used to support a proposition that income tax and NICs are due (if at all) only on the use of the money or assets during the period of the employee's employment and not on their full value.

The legislation inserts a new part 7A into the Income Tax (Earning and Pensions) Act 2003. The legislation ensures that where a third party makes provision for what is in substance a reward or recognition, or a loan, in connection with the employee's current, former, or future employment, an income tax charge arises. Income tax is charged on the sum of money made available and on the higher of the cost or market value where an asset is used to deliver the reward or recognition, for example by transferring or otherwise making available an asset for the employee's use and benefit as if the employee owned the asset. The amount concerned will count as a payment of employment income and the employer will be required to account for PAYE.

There will be protection for specified types of arrangements involving third parties—including registered pension schemes, approved employee share schemes and ordinary commercial transactions. The tax treatment of benefits packages which are available across the employer's work force will also be unaffected by the measure, provided that the benefits are genuinely available to substantially all employees and cannot be accessed by only specially selected individuals.

The legislation will take effect from 6 April 2011 and apply to rewards, recognitions or loans which are earmarked for the benefit of an employee, or former or prospective employee, or otherwise made available on and after that date.

In addition, anti-forestalling provisions apply to the payment of sums (including loans) and the provision of readily convertible assets for the purposes of securing the payment of sums (including loans) where the sum is paid or the asset is provided between 9 December 2010 and 5 April 2011 where, if paid or provided on or after 6 April 2011, they would be caught by the legislation.

The anti-forestalling charge will arise on 6 April 2012 if sums paid have not been repaid, or readily convertible assets used to secure the payment of a sum have not been returned before that date, or not otherwise charged to tax under section 62 of ITEPA 2003. Any sum paid to which these anti-forestalling provisions apply, less a deduction for any amount which has been repaid, will count as employment income and the employer will be required to account for income tax under PAYE as if the amount concerned was a payment made on 6 April 2012. The value of any readily convertible asset provided (to which the anti-forestalling provisions apply) will also count as employment income, subject to the operation of PAYE by the employer as if the amount concerned was a payment made on 6 April 2012.

Regulations will be brought forward to apply National Insurance Contributions to the amounts charged to tax by this legislation.

Further details are contained in a draft explanatory note published on HMRC's website today, together with the draft legislation.

Tax Policy Making and Draft Finance Bill 2011

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): At the June Budget, the Government set out their commitment to build a new approach to tax policy making—one founded on predictability, stability and simplicity—with consultation on policy and scrutiny of legislation as the cornerstones.

Today the Government are publishing their response to the consultation "Tax policy making: a new approach", which sets a number of concrete improvements to the way in which tax policy is developed, communicated and legislated. We have already taken steps to improve predictability of the tax system, for example through the "Corporate Tax Road Map" published on 29 November 2009.

We are also making further progress towards our objectives with the publication, in draft, of the majority of 2011 Finance Bill clauses. This practice will become an established feature in the tax policy making cycle. Confirming the majority of intended tax changes at least three months ahead of publication of the Bill supports predictability in the tax system and provides an opportunity for draft legislation to be properly scrutinised.

The draft clauses will be open to consultation until 9 February. HMRC will host an open day for tax practitioners and tax managers on 24 January 2011. The Finance Bill will be published in full on 31 March 2011.

In response to feedback received through the consultation on tax policy making, we have also published a supporting document that provides an overview of the draft clauses published today. This sets out, for each draft clause, the proposed change, why we seek the change and what we expect the impacts to be.

Alongside the relevant draft clauses, the Government are also publishing:

a response to the consultation on furnished holiday lettings;

a response to the consultation on pensions annuitisation;

a response to the consultation on taxation of gaming machines

a response to the consultation on the simplification of corporate capital gains;

a response to consultation on modernisation of investment trust companies; and

two consultations relating to HMRC's powers review.

Draft clauses, the Government's response to the consultation on tax policy making and other documents published today can be found on HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs websites.

The Government have also tabled two separate written statements today in relation to the following clauses:

Disguised remuneration; and

Restricting pensions tax relief.

Unfunded Public Service Pension Contributions

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Danny Alexander): The Government announced at the spending review their plans to take forward recommendations made by the Independent Public Service Pension Commission in its interim report. These plans included a commitment to undertake a review of the discount rate used to set contributions in the unfunded public service pension schemes.

Today the public consultation on the discount rate has been launched and the Government would welcome comments from all interested groups. The consultation document has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses, can be found at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/consult_unfunded_pensions.htm and will end on 3 March.

Restricting Pensions Tax Relief

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr Mark Hoban): On 14 October the Government announced that, from April 2011, the annual allowance for tax-privileged pension saving will be reduced from £255,000 to £50,000 and that from April 2012 the lifetime allowance will be reduced from £1.8 million to £1.5 million, to ensure that pensions tax relief remains fair and affordable. Representations were sought on some specific policy issues around reducing the lifetime allowance and the Government are today setting out their proposals for the operation of a new protection regime for individuals who may have already built up pension savings in the expectation that the lifetime allowance would remain at its current level of £1,800,000.

This new "fixed protection" will give anyone the opportunity to apply for a lifetime allowance of £1,800,000 instead of the reduced lifetime allowance of £1,500,000 on the condition that they no longer actively contribute to their pension or actively accrue pension benefits (that is, broadly excluding annual inflationary uprating). Individuals who are already entitled to primary protection and/or enhanced protection will also continue to receive their current levels of protection.

Draft clauses and draft guidance are being published today on the reduced lifetime allowance, including the operation of "fixed protection". It is intended that from 6 April 2012 individuals will be considered "inactive" if they do not make or receive any further contributions to a registered defined contribution pension scheme, or build up additional annual pension over an allowable "relevant percentage" in a registered defined benefit or cash balance pension scheme. In order to prevent pension scheme rules being amended following this announcement so as to allow for artificially inflated annual increases to pensions rates the "relevant percentage" is defined as being the rate of increase specified in the scheme rules as at today's date, 9 December 2010. If no rate is specified in the scheme rules, the "relevant percentage" will be the annual percentage increase in the consumer prices index for September in the previous tax year.

A revised set of draft clauses on the annual allowance, that were previously published on 14 October, have also been published today. This contains some additions and amendments, including details of the proposed exemption from the annual allowance in cases of severe ill health.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Localism Bill and Social Housing

The Minister for Housing and Local Government (Grant Shapps): Following the spending review, I am today announcing further details of the new "affordable rent" model to be offered by private registered providers of social housing (hereafter referred to as housing associations) from April 2011.

We must make far better use of existing social housing ensuring that we target support where it is needed most. The Government published a policy paper, "Local decisions: a fairer fixture for social housing" on 22 November 2010. The localism Bill will take forward radical reforms, including flexible tenancies and changes to the way social housing is allocated. The Government have given a clear commitment to ensure that the existing tenancies and rents of secure and assured tenants of social landlords are protected and respected in these reforms.

The Bill will contain a wide-ranging package of reforms that will devolve greater power and freedoms to councils and neighbourhoods, establish powerful new rights for communities, revolutionise the planning system, and give communities control over housing decisions.

Given the huge pressures on public finances we must also ensure that we get more for the money we invest in new social homes. Alongside the Bill, the introduction of affordable rent will represent a significant first step towards giving social landlords much greater freedom to respond to local housing need.

The Homes and Communities Agency will publish a full framework document early next year that will form the basis for bids from providers who are interested in offering affordable rent.

Overview

Affordable rent is designed to:

maximise the delivery of new social housing by making the best possible use of constrained public subsidy and the existing social housing stock; and

provide an offer which is more diverse for the range of people accessing social housing, providing alternatives to traditional social rent.

Affordable rent falls within the definition of social housing in section 68 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 (and, in particular, the definition of low-cost rental accommodation in section 69 of that Act). Affordable rent properties will therefore be subject to regulation by the Tenant Services Authority and its Homes and Communities Agency successor where they are provided by a registered provider.

Affordable rent will offer housing associations the flexibility to convert vacant social rent properties to affordable rent at re-let, at a rent level of up to 80% of market rent. Housing associations will be able to convert vacant properties to affordable rent where they have reached an investment agreement with the Home and Communities Agency about how additional rental income will be reinvested in the supply of new affordable housing.

The Homes and Communities Agency has a capital budget of almost £4.5 billion over the spending review period to fund affordable housing supply, of which around £2 billion will support the delivery of new affordable rent homes (the total also includes £2.3 billion to meet existing commitments). While grant funding will primarily target affordable rent, there may be some scope for delivery of low cost home ownership as part of the agreements, where this is appropriate for local circumstances and helps to promote the overall supply of affordable homes. Ministers intend to make the payment of grant funding conditional on transparency.

Agreements could also involve approval in principle for future asset management plans that include social housing disposals, subject to the need for statutory consent and consultation with the relevant local authorities. The Tenant Services Authority will need to be engaged in the process to ensure that providers can continue to meet its regulatory standards, including on viability.

Allocation

We envisage that affordable rent properties will be allocated in the same way that social rent properties are now. The existing regulatory obligation on associations to co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function on the allocation of social rent properties will also apply to affordable rent. Similarly we envisage that existing lettings arrangements operated by local authorities and housing associations will continue to apply and that affordable rent properties will where appropriate be made available through choice-based lettings.

The statutory and regulatory framework for allocations provides scope for local flexibility. Local authorities and associations may wish to exercise this discretion in relation to affordable rent in order to meet local needs and priorities in the most effective way possible (for example, through the adoption of appropriate local lettings policies).

Rent

Affordable rent properties will not be subject to the rent restructuring policy that applies to social rented housing. This policy was originally outlined by the previous Government in March 2001 (in the "Guide to Social Rent Reforms") and implemented by the then Housing Corporation (via the "Rent Influencing Regime Guidance" published by the Corporation in October 2001). The previous Government's direction to the Tenant Services Authority issued in November 2009 required the regulator to set a standard on rent that reflected the same policy.

In particular, the direction required the Tenant Services Authority, when setting a standard on rents, to have regard to the social rent guidance. The direction defined the term "social rent guidance" as the guide to social rent reforms published in March2001 "and any guidance issued by the Department, or its successors, in relation to that document". This statement should be treated as guidance issued in relation to the March 2001 document. The direction also obliged the Tenant Services Authority to set a rent standard with a view to achieving, so far as possible, the target rent policy set out in the rent influencing regime guidance.

This statement clarifies that affordable rent properties are not covered by the Government's rent restructuring policy. Note that a property is only considered to be "affordable rent" for these purposes where it is linked to an agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency on investment.

Housing associations will be able to let an affordable rent property (whether a converted void or new build) at up to 80% of market rent for an equivalent property for that size and location. The association's calculation of the market rent would need to be based on a residential lettings estimate for a property of the appropriate size, condition and area. Valuations should be in accordance with a RICS recognised method.

The maximum annual rent increase on an affordable rent property will be RPI + 0.5%. However associations will be required to rebase the rent on each occasion that a new tenancy agreement is issued (or renewed) for an affordable rent property. This requirement, which overrides the RPI + 0.5% limit, is designed to ensure that the rent set at the beginning of each new tenancy is no higher than 80% of the market rent.

Tenure

The Government have already published radical proposals to give greater flexibility to both local authority and housing association landlords over the types of tenure they can offer to social housing tenants[1]. In particular, the Government believe that it is no longer right to require that every social tenancy should be for life — regardless of the household's particular circumstances. The aim is to create a more flexible system so that scarce public resource can be focused on those who need it most.

The affordable rent model is the first step towards delivering these wider reforms. Housing associations will be able to offer affordable rent on fixed-term tenancies, but they will also retain the option to offer lifetime tenancies should they wish to do so. We would expect associations to use this additional flexibility to ensure that help and support are focused on those who need it most when they need it most, and to build strong and cohesive communities. They will need to meet the existing regulatory requirement to publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management.

The Government are currently consulting on their wider tenure reform proposals for social housing, including on the rights and protections that should be available to tenants as part of these changes. These proposals include a minimum fixed-term of two years for all general needs social tenancies, the right to acquire for tenants with a fixed-term tenancy of two years or more (subject to the existing conditions and exceptions) and changes to succession rights[2]. Some of the proposals will require primary legislation and we intend to deliver these through the localism Bill. The final proposals, once implemented (either by legislation or regulation), will apply to fixed-term tenancies that are subsequently issued for both affordable rent and traditional social rent.

However we envisage that the first affordable rent properties will be let during 2011-12, before the wider tenure reform proposals are due to come on stream. We have therefore considered which of the proposed conditions should be attached to the affordable rent model from the start. It should be noted that the proposals that require primary legislation (for example, on the right to acquire) cannot be brought forward in this way.

We wish to apply the following (non-statutory) conditions to the affordable rent model:

> a minimum fixed term of two years for affordable rent tenancies; and
>
> where a landlord decides, in line with its published policy, not to reissue an affordable rent tenancy at the end of the fixed-term, the landlord should provide advice and assistance to help the tenant find suitable alternative accommodation. Landlords and tenants may wish to consider a range of "end of tenancy" options depending on the needs of the household concerned. This could include selling the property to the tenant via conversion to shared ownership (subject to consent).

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[1] "Local Decisions: a fairer future for social housing" (22 November 2010).

[2] Full details of these proposals are set out in section 2 of the "Local Decisions" document

DEFENCE

War Pensions: Uprating 2011

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Andrew Robathan): The new rates of war pensions and allowances proposed from April 2011 are set out in the following tables. The annual uprating of war pensions and allowances for 2011 will take place from the week beginning 11 April 2011. Rates for 2011 are increasing by 3.1% in line with the Consumer Price Index as outlined in the Budget.

War Pensions Rates

(Weekly rates unless otherwise shown)	*Rates 2010*	*Rates 2011*
WAR PENSIONS		
Disablement Pension (100% rates)		
officer (£ per annum)	8072.00	8323.00
other ranks (weekly amount)	154.70	159.50
Age allowances payable from age 65		
40%-50%	10.40	10.70
over 50% but not over 70%	15.90	16.40
over 70% but not over 90%	22.65	23.35
over 90%	31.80	32.80
Disablement gratuity (one-off payment)		
specified minor injury (min.)	985.00	1016.00
specified minor injury (max.)	7356.00	7584.00
1-5% gratuity	2459.00	2535.00
6-14% gratuity	5468.00	5638.00
15-19% gratuity	9564.00	9860.00
SUPPLEMENTARY ALLOWANCES		
Unemployability allowance		
Personal	95.60	98.55
Adult dependency increase	53.10	54.75

War Pensions Rates

(Weekly rates unless otherwise shown)	*Rates* *2010*	*Rates* *2011*
Increase for first child	12.35	12.75
increase for subsequent children	14.50	14.95
Invalidity allowance		
higher rate	18.95	19.55
middle rate	12.20	12.60
lower rate	6.10	6.30
Constant attendance allowance		
exceptional rate	116.80	120.40
intermediate rate	87.60	90.30
Full-day rate	58.40	60.20
Part-day rate	29.20	30.10
Comforts allowance		
higher rate	25.10	25.90
lower rate	12.55	12.95
Mobility supplement	55.65	57.40
Allowance for lowered standard of occupation (maximum)	58.32	60.12
Therapeutic earnings limit (annual rate)	4836.00	4940.00
Exceptionally severe disablement allowance	58.40	60.20
Severe disablement occupational allowance	29.20	30.10
Clothing allowance (£ per annum)	199.00	205.00
Education allowance (£ per annum) (max)	120.00	120.00
WIDOW(ER)S BENEFITS		
Widow(er)s'-other ranks (basic with children) (weekly amount)	117.30	120.95
Widow(er)-Officer (basic with children) (£ per annum)	6239.00	6432.00
Childless widow(er)s' u-40 (other ranks) (weekly amount	28.10	28.97
Childless widow(er)s' u-40 (Officer highest rate both wars) (£ per annum)	2167.00	2234.00
Supplementary Pension	78.48	80.91
Age allowance		
(a) age 65 to 69	13.40	13.80
(b) age 70 to 79	25.70	26.50
(c) age 80 and over	38.10	39.30
Children's allowance		
Increase for first child	18.40	18.95
Increase for subsequent children	20.60	21.25
Orphan's pension		
Increase for first child	21.00	21.65
Increase for subsequent children	23.05	23.75
Unmarried dependant living as spouse (max)	114.95	118.60
Rent allowance (maximum)	44.25	45.60
Adult orphan's pension (maximum)	90.10	92.90

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Foreign Affairs Council and General Affairs Council

The Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington): The Foreign Affairs Council and General Affairs Council will meet in Brussels on 13 and 14 December. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary will attend the Foreign Affairs Council. I will attend the General Affairs Council.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL (FAC)

Western Balkans

We expect Ministers to focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), and in particular the need for the new Government to focus on the EU and wider reform agenda, including constitutional reforms. There may be some discussion of the EU institutional presence in BiH; we remain committed to the completion of the "5+2" conditionality for the transition of the Office of the High Representative to an EU-only presence.

Additionally, the noble Baroness Ashton is likely to update Ministers on preparations for the EU-facilitated Belgrade/Pristina dialogue. We hope this begins as soon as possible. There may be an initial exchange of views on the outcomes of the 12 December parliamentary elections in Kosovo.

Sudan

We expect conclusions to be adopted on preparations ahead of the referendum on self-determination for southern Sudan in January 2011, as part of the final stages of the comprehensive peace agreement. We believe that these conclusions should emphasise the importance of focused, sustained efforts to ensure a timely, peaceful and credible referendum. We also expect Ministers to discuss humanitarian contingency planning for the referendum, and to underline our continuing collective long-term support for northern and southern Sudan, regardless of the referendum outcome.

Middle East Peace Process (MEPP)

Ministers will discuss latest developments in the region. We expect conclusions emphasising the EU's support for US efforts, in conjunction with other members of the Quartet. Ministers may also discuss how best to improve access to Gaza.

Somalia/Horn of Africa

Ministers are expected to assess the effectiveness of EU efforts in the Horn of Africa, and in particular support to the peace process in Somalia.

We continue to support EU efforts to train the Somali security forces through the EU training mission Somalia. The existence of pay, command and control and infrastructure for returning troops is vital to the success of the mission. We encourage ongoing EU support to the African Union mission to Somalia, which provides the secure space within which political reconciliation can take place. On the political track, debate is likely to focus on support to Somalia's regions: Puntland and Somaliland. We support EU work in these areas, building on a central tenet of the UK strategy: support to local and regional areas of stability.

Conclusions are likely to reaffirm the importance of work on Somalia, a UK priority in Africa; raise Somalia's profile on the EU agenda; and task further work on scenarios for how to end the current transitional period and what should succeed it post-August 2011.

Afghanistan

We expect the noble Baroness Ashton to consider how to increase the effectiveness of EU assistance in Afghanistan, in the context of the EU action plan for Afghanistan. The discussion is expected to follow a briefing by the European Union Special Representatives (EUSR) Ambassador Usackas for Development Ministers at the 9 December FAC (on which my right hon. Friend the Development Secretary has already written to the House).

Strategic Partners

This discussion is likely to take place over dinner on 13 December. The noble Baroness Ashton will solicit views from Partners how to develop on the EU's relationship with Russia, China and the US. We are keen for the noble Baroness Ashton to continue her work on these partnerships, devising a set of concrete objectives for the EU's external action. We believe that trade is a central component of these relationships.

Moldova

Discussion will focus on the outcome of the 28 November parliamentary elections. These were largely conducted to internationally accepted standards. Despite the encouraging conduct of the elections, and a good turnout, neither the outgoing coalition Government nor any single party won enough seats to form a Government or to elect a permanent president. The prospect of further stalemate and political instability remains very real. We fully support the statement made by the noble Baroness Ashton and the Enlargement Commissioner, Stefan Füle (see link below).

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_ data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/11 8093.pdf

Iran

The noble Baroness Ashton is likely to report on the recent E3+3 talks with Iran in Geneva. Talks will continue in January 2011. The noble Baroness Ashton released a statement on behalf of the E3+3 on 7 December (see link below)

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/118263.pdf

Priorities for 2011

The noble Baroness Ashton will solicit views on priorities for her and the External Action Service in 2011.

AOB

A number of smaller issues are on the agenda under AOB. Ministers will hear reports back from the OSCE Summit in Astana, which I attended along with my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister. Some Partners have requested a general discussion on the plight of religious minorities in Iraq. We expect Ministers to agree (without discussion) short conclusions on the Democratic Republic of Congo, focusing on the forthcoming elections.

GENERAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL (GAC)

Enlargement

The presidency will chair a discussion on draft European Council Conclusions, taking stock of progress on EU enlargement and on the stabilisation and association process in the Western Balkans. These will be informed by the European Commission's Communication of 9 November setting out an enlargement strategy and progress reports for candidates and potential candidates. I submitted this communication to Parliament on 30 November under an explanatory memorandum.

As I set out in that memorandum, the Government believe the Commission's communication to be a broadly fair and balanced assessment. We will seek conclusions reconfirming support for EU enlargement and recognition that the accession process gives strong encouragement to political and economic reform in the enlargement countries and reinforces peace, democracy and stability in Europe. We agree with the Commission's view that progress towards the EU should take place at the rate of reform of the (potential) candidate country and that key challenges remain for most enlargement countries, including on the rule of law, and the fight against corruption and organised crime. We further support the Commission's view that bilateral disputes should not be allowed to hold up the accession process.

On individual countries, we will welcome progress made this year by Turkey with the recent constitutional reforms, and support the Commission's recognition of Turkey's role in the region. We will expect conclusions to indicate the EU's readiness to intensify its foreign policy dialogue with Turkey. However, we share the Council's disappointment that Turkey has not yet fulfilled its obligation to open its ports to trade with Cyprus under the additional protocol to the association agreement and agree that further efforts are needed to accelerate the pace of Turkey's accession negotiations.

We support the Commission's view that full co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal remains a requirement for Croatia's progress throughout the accession process, and that Iceland will need to address existing obligation, such as those identified by the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Surveillance Authority (ESA) under the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement.

We will seek conclusions reaffirming the European perspective of the whole Western Balkans region. We support the European Commission's recommendation to grant candidate status to Montenegro and to open accession negotiations with Macedonia (FYROM). We will seek balanced conclusions consistent with Kosovo's European perspective. The Government are concerned about the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and will seek conclusions urging its political leaders to put the reform agenda at the heart of their new government programmes.

Preparations for the December and February European Councils

The presidency has invited the President of the Council, Van Rompuy, to discuss preparations for the European Council of 16 and17 December. The Council agenda covers Economic Governance—the permanent crisis mechanism and pension reform, the EU budget and External Relations (Strategic Partnerships). The discussion on 14 December is likely to focus on economic and eurozone issues. The Prime Minister will report to Parliament on the Council in the normal way.

There will also be a short information point on the February European Council. No agenda has yet been issued, but we expect energy policy and innovation to feature.

Disaster Response

There is likely to be a further discussion of the Commission's ideas for disaster response, following last month's presentation by the Commissioner for International Co-operation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response (Georgieva). The Commission's proposals—with which we are broadly content—concern the response to disasters inside and outside the EU, considering both civil protection and humanitarian assistance, and seeking cost-effectiveness through use of common assets.

Cohesion Funds

The General Affairs Council will have a preliminary discussion of the Commission's Report on Structural Cohesion Funds

http://ec.europa.eu./regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/repor_en.htm

following the Liege informal Ministerial of 22 and 23 November. Baroness Wilcox represented the UK. The Commission will end its EU-wide consultations on the proposals on 31 January 2011.

Europe 2020

If there is time, we expect the presidency to give a short update on Europe 2020, the EU's economic growth strategy.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr Henry Bellingham): My right hon. Friend the Minister of State for International Development and I wish to update the House about the situation in the Turks and Caicos Islands, a British overseas territory.

It has become clear to this Government since they assumed office that there is a serious and deteriorating problem in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

In August 2009, the previous Government suspended the Turks and Caicos Islands ministerial Government for an initial period of up to two years. A special investigation and prosecution team was appointed to undertake a criminal investigation into matters identified by Sir Robin Auld's report, which concluded that there was a high probability of systemic corruption in the former Turks and Caicos Islands Government. The team is pursuing its work as rigorously and as quickly as possible.

On 1 July 2010, as an urgent initial response to the unfolding financial plight of the Turks and Caicos Islands Government, the Secretary of State for International Development stated that his Department was having to step in to design and put in place a package of financial support with commercial lenders, as well as providing an immediate short-term loan to help meet unavoidable commitments including staff salaries for the islands' police, health and education services.

It has become clear to UK Ministers that the fiscal picture in the Turks and Caicos Islands represents an unacceptable collapse in the fiscal governance of the territory, which needs urgently to be addressed. While funding the immediate unavoidable costs of the Turks and Caicos Islands Government, the Department for International Development has provided a chief financial officer to the Turks and Caicos Islands Government, to meet the urgent task of addressing its structural deficit and putting it on a course towards a sustainable fiscal surplus in the financial year 2012-13. In addition, the Department is reaching the final stages of putting in place a medium-term financial package.

In September 2010, I announced in the Turks and Caicos Islands that the UK Government did not want to postpone elections any longer than necessary, but that they could not be held in 2011. We intend to submit to the 15 December meeting of the Privy Council an Order in Council continuing in force the Turks and Caicos Islands Constitution (Interim Amendment) Order 2009 beyond 14 August 2011.

I undertook to set out milestones that would need to be met before elections could once again take place. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development currently jointly assess these milestones to be as follows:

> implementation of a new Turks and Caicos Islands constitution order, in support of recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, which underpins good governance and sound public financial management;
>
> introduction of a number of new ordinances, including those making provision for: (i) the electoral process and regulation of political parties; (ii) integrity and accountability in public life; (iii) public financial management;

establishment of robust and transparent public financial management processes to provide a stable economic environment and a strengthening of the Turks and Caicos Islands Government's capacity to manage their public finances;

implementation of budget measures to put the Turks and Caicos Islands Government on track to achieve a fiscal surplus in the financial year ending March 2013;

implementation of a transparent and fair process for acquisition of belongership;

significant progress with the civil and criminal processes recommended by the Commission of Inquiry, and implementation of measures to enable these to continue unimpeded;

implementation of a new Crown land policy;

substantial progress in the reform of the public service.

Reaching these milestones will require time, care and hard work by the UK and the Turks and Caicos Islands Government, and particularly by the Turks and Caicos Islands public sector. It will need the encouragement of the community. There will be public consultation on a number of issues across Turks and Caicos Islands and, we hope, the engagement of the islands political parties. The milestones we have identified do not include everything that will have to be done before elections take place. In general the UK Government will have to be satisfied that the necessary reforms have been put in place to address the issues raised by the Commission of Inquiry, to prevent such maladministration being repeated, and to engender the confidence of the international community. It is our considered view at this stage, that the milestones listed above are the minimum preconditions before the Turks and Caicos Islands can return to elected government.

The UK Government have helped protect the Turks and Caicos Islands Government finances from complete collapse and intend to provide continuing financial support. However it is important that the islands make good use of this period of UK financial support to address the deep crisis in public finance and to achieve a fiscal surplus. The UK Government currently intend to retain sufficient control over public finances following elections in order to ensure that the Turks and Caicos Islands Government emerges from its financial crisis as soon as possible, and that the temporary package of UK support is no longer needed.

We hope achievement of these milestones will also help any future Turks and Caicos Islands Government to continue to embed good governance, with full respect for the rule of law and human rights, and zero tolerance of corruption.

Achieving these milestones will be a great challenge. As we now see things, the UK Government will only be able to set a date for the elections when the milestones have been reached. We hope that this will happen in time for elections to take place in 2012.

UK's Relationship with the Commonwealth

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr William Hague): Her Majesty's Government have undertaken to strengthen the United Kingdom's relationship with the Commonwealth and to ensure that the United Kingdom is closely involved in plans to reinvigorate this unique organisation.

The purpose of this statement is to inform the House about the Government's reasons and objectives for doing this.

The Commonwealth today is as important to the United Kingdom as ever. The coalition agreement sets out a vision

> "to strengthen the Commonwealth as a focus for promoting democratic values and development."

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office will lead a co-ordinated, cross-Whitehall approach to help the Commonwealth achieve its potential and which underlines the United Kingdom's commitment to this unique global organisation.

Our relationship with the Commonwealth has been primarily based on its history, values and common bonds. But the modem Commonwealth, including countries that were never British colonies, has been transformed. Today's Commonwealth bridges all the continents, embraces almost 2 billion people, and represents all of the world's major faiths. Its membership includes many of the fastest-growing and increasingly technologically advanced economies in the world. These are the great markets of today and tomorrow. Equally important is the forum it provides for numerous smaller nations which may feel that their voice is lost in the wider United Nations structure and who find the more informal Commonwealth setting an ideal place to be heard.

The Commonwealth of the 21st century should stand for democracy, development, and human rights, and act as a recognised force for good on the issues of our times. It could also be used much more effectively to further the United Kingdom's foreign policy priorities and worldwide economic interests. The United Kingdom is already at the heart of this ready-made network, which fits perfectly into the new global environment. In the words of the Head of the Commonwealth, Her Majesty the Queen, the Commonwealth is indeed "the face of the future". It is a future in which the United Kingdom will play a full part.

To achieve this, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will work closely with Whitehall partners to:

Define and develop ways in which the modern Commonwealth can add value to the delivery of United Kingdom policy goals and act as a global soft power network.

Use the Commonwealth to develop trade and investment opportunities for the United Kingdom and to promote intra-Commonwealth trade.

Support Commonwealth development programmes and bilateral assistance in Commonwealth countries.

Reform, strengthen and renew the Commonwealth structures and purposes through the Eminent Persons Group, the Commonwealth ministerial action group reform process, and in concert with key partners ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in 2011.

Focus Commonwealth activity where it has strengths and conclude activity where others are better placed and better resourced.

Strengthen the Commonwealth through expanded membership and partner and observer agreements.

Work with the Commonwealth secretariat better to demonstrate the benefits of membership to the public in Commonwealth nations

Use the Commonwealth in other international institutions (e.g. the United Nations, the Group of 20) where we can develop common foreign policy aims.

Connect with the "internal Commonwealth", the many United Kingdom communities with close ties to Commonwealth countries, to the benefit of social cohesion within British society.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Justice and Home Affairs (Post-Council Statement)

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mrs Theresa May): The Justice and Home Affairs Council was held on 2 and 3 December in Brussels. My right hon. and learned Friend, the Secretary of State for Justice and I attended on behalf of the United Kingdom. The following issues were discussed at the Council:

The Council began with Mixed Committee with Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland (non-EU Schengen States). The Commission provided an update on the progress of the second generation of the Schengen Information System (SIS II) focusing on agreeing the additional financial facility for member states to cover national implementation of the system.

The Commission then reported on the implementation of the Council conclusions on 29 measures for reinforcing the protection of the external borders and combating illegal immigration. Internal EU progress included the Frontex Rapid Border Intervention team (RABIT) at the Greece-Turkey border, the Asylum Support Office and the Frontex operational office in Piraeus. Externally, the EU had contributed to a regional protection programme in the Horn of Africa, concluded readmission agreements with Georgia and Pakistan, signed a mobility partnership with Georgia, and opened a migration dialogue with Libya. The Commission will report on the development of the European Surveillance System (EUROSUR) in spring 2011. The Commission highlighted the need by member states to adopt the new Frontex regulation; conclude further working arrangements between Frontex and third countries; develop EUROSUR and close ongoing readmission negotiations.

Under Mixed Committee AOB, Switzerland reported the results of last week's referendum in which a majority of the population voted in favour of automatically deporting foreign national criminals.

Following Mixed Committee the main Council began with a debate on asylum and migration during which the presidency noted recent achievements from political agreement on the long-term residents' directive to the first meeting of the Asylum Support Office and progress on the Greece action plan. The presidency welcomed the four incoming presidencies' agreement to deliver the asylum package by 2012 and emphasised that all member states must meet their obligations under EU law. The Government welcomed the opportunity to discuss some of the most pressing challenges member states faced, and set out domestic plans to bring levels of non-EU migration down to sustainable levels. The Government were proud to share the EU's strong tradition of protecting genuine refugees but noted there were clear weaknesses in the system. The Government stated that a focus on fast, efficient decision making; reluctance to see legislation as the solution; and emphasis on practical co-operation was needed. Delays in the negotiations so far demonstrated member states' reluctance to compromise on proposals which would threaten their individual asylum systems. Instead, practical steps should be taken to provide quicker protection to those in need, and to support the safe return of those with no grounds to stay. The first meeting of the European Asylum Support Office was an important milestone. But the situation in Greece was the most pressing challenge and here the Government were pleased to see contributions to the national action plan were coming together; but a sustainable improvement would take years of commitment and substantial resources. More needed to be done. The EU had to take proactive action to stop new illegal immigration threats before they created this pressure. Commissioner Malmstrom updated Council on progress so far under the Greek action plan, set out next steps and urged Greece to take ownership of the plan.

The presidency updated Council on the results of its legal migration conference, which focused on the challenges of an older EU population, declining labour force, and weakening cultural identity in the face of immigration.

Over a private lunch Interior Ministers had an exchange of views on alternatives to the detention of children and agreed on the split-seat solution of the location of the IT Agency with infrastructure remaining in Strasbourg and its management in Tallinn.

After lunch the Council discussed air cargo security. Following the recent discovery of explosive devices in air cargo, a high-level group produced a report on strengthening air cargo security for both Council meetings on 2 December (Transport and Justice and Home Affairs). The presidency presented this report, which sets out ways to strengthen the security regime around air cargo coming into the EU. The Government broadly welcomed the report and the associated action plan. The presidency concluded orally that the Council had a "positive appreciation" of the report, and asked the Commission and member states to ensure a speedy implementation of the action plan. The Commission was asked to report back to the Council on progress made. A parallel discussion took place in the Transport Council.

The EU counter terrorism co-ordinator presented his regular assessment of progress against the EU's CT action plan and noted in particular the importance of coherence between the internal and external dimension of CT. The Government broadly welcomed the report supporting the idea of a discussion of external CT in the JHA Council with the EU's High Representative. However, the Government expressed concerns about plans to use article 75 of the treaty on the functioning of the EU as the legal base for an internal terrorist sanctions regime.

Next the Council agreed the three negotiating mandates to authorise the start of negotiations for agreements between the EU and the United States, Canada, and Australia for the transfer and use of passenger name records (PNR) to prevent and combat terrorism and other forms of serious cross-border crime. The Government welcomed the mandates but argued that we should also be collecting data on intra-EU flights. This would give the EU the best chance of avoiding future terrorist incidents.

The Council agreed the action plan on combating heavy arms trafficking, which recommends an integrated approach to combating arms trafficking and more particularly heavy fire arms, and adopted the conclusions on itinerant gangs which seek to define the problem of itinerant crime groups and agree an administrative approach to tackle the problem, including increased cross-border co-operation. The Council also agreed Council conclusions on preventing and combating identity-related crimes and on identity management with amendments which had been sought by the UK. The conclusions set out instructions for having a robust structure of identity management to combat the threat posed by identity-related crime.

Commissioner Malmström presented the communication on the EU Internal Security Communication to Council. The communication looks to translate the Council's EU internal security strategy into action points.

Next the presidency updated the Council on the outcomes of and proposed follow-up to the EU-Russia Permanent Partnership Council (PPC) (freedom, security and justice) (18-19 November), and the Western Balkans ministerial forum (23-24 November). The presidency stated that there was an agreement to work on a stage-by-stage basis, to ensure that all commitments for data protection were met, as well as the fight against drugs, extradition and aid. On the Western Balkans, the presidency felt that there was mixed progress, with some countries doing much better than others; generally the legislation was good, but implementation was taking longer than hoped.

Under AOB Commissioner Georgieva (Humanitarian Aid) presented the recent Commission communication on civil protection, which was broadly welcomed by member states.

On the justice day, the presidency informed the Council that agreement on the text of the EU directive on human trafficking had been reached with the European Parliament. Commissioner Malmström welcomed the historic agreement of the first criminal law instrument since Lisbon, although she regretted the failure to extend extra-territorial jurisdiction to habitual residents.

Next, the Council agreed a general approach on the draft directive on combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children and child pornography. This draft directive aims to update existing EU legislation in the area of combating child sexual exploitation and pornography in line with technological developments. The Government supported the presidency and agreed with the general approach.

The presidency noted they had made good progress on the draft directive on the European investigation order but that a number of issues still needed to be considered.

The presidency also sought a general approach on the draft directive on the right to information in criminal proceedings. This is the second measure in the road map to strengthen procedural rights in criminal proceedings. It aims to set common minimum standards and improve the rights of suspects and accused persons by ensuring that they receive information about their rights. The Government maintained their parliamentary scrutiny reservation on this proposal but also welcomed the efforts made by the presidency to find a compromise to the text. The presidency concluded that there was support for a general approach.

The Council adopted a negotiating mandate authorising the Commission to begin negotiations with the United States on a proposed EU-US agreement on the protection of personal data when transferred for law enforcement purposes. The Government support the proposed agreement in principle, but were unable to vote in favour of the draft negotiating mandate because we consider that the UK rather than the EU should negotiate rules concerning data exchanges between the UK and the US under their bilateral arrangements.

There was a discussion about the Commission's recently published Communication on "a comprehensive approach on personal data protection in the European Union". The Commission argued that, while the principles of the data protection directive are still valid, a more comprehensive approach to data protection is needed to bring the legislation in line with technological developments. The Commission will be bringing forward new proposals in 2011.

Next, the presidency obtained agreement among participating member states of the regulation implementing enhanced co-operation in the field of law applicable to divorce—Rome III. The Government are not participating in this measure.

The presidency provided information about a seminar held on 14 October about resolving international child abduction disputes through mediation.

The Council then considered a state-of-play report from the presidency about the progress made during its term in the area of e-justice.

Under AOB, the Commission presented their citizenship report highlighting the importance of citizenship rights and the need to ensure they are better communicated.

Over lunch, there was a discussion about the forthcoming directive on access to a lawyer in criminal cases. This will be the third measure on the road map to strengthening criminal procedural rights, which is likely to be published in June 2011. The Commission is still in the early stages of drafting the proposal.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Parliamentary Written Question (Correction)

The Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Steve Webb): I regret to inform the House there was an inaccuracy in my answer to parliamentary question 20342 on 1 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 564W.

The response indicated that since 2006 credit unions have made over 262,056 loans to financially excluded people, with an additional 43,308 loans made through other community finance organisations. It also indicated that over 275,000 customers who took out a Growth Fund loan also opened a bank or savings account.

The figure quoted for customers who took out a Growth Fund loan and also opened a bank or savings account is a projection to the end of March 2011, but the response makes it appear that this is the figure to date. It is in fact estimated that the number of people who will have opened a bank or savings account to September 2010 is 216,000.

Skills Conditionality: Public Consultation

The Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Chris Grayling): Today my hon. Friend the Minister for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning and I have published a joint document setting out how we intend to implement skills conditionality when certain benefit claimants are referred to training as part of their journey back to work.

The Government believe that individuals who are able to look for or prepare for work should be required to do so as a condition of receiving benefit, and those who fail to meet their responsibilities should face a financial sanction. Improving someone's skills is one of the key ways to help individuals prepare for and gain work.

This consultation proposes that claimants required to either actively seek, or prepare for, work could be mandated to undertake activity to address an identified skills need which will aid their movement into work. This puts activity to address a skills need on to the same basis as other conditionality requirements.

The proposed policy will require legislative changes. The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the implementation of skills conditionality that will make it fair, consistent and as administratively straightforward as possible. The consultation will run until 3 February.

Copies of the consultation document are available on the Department's website at: http://dwp.gov.uk/consultations/.

Benefits Uprating

The Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Steve Webb): I am pleased to announce the proposed rates of benefit for 2011, which are set out in the table below. The annual uprating of benefits will take place for state pensions and most other benefits in the first full week of the tax year. In 2011, this will be the week beginning 11 April. A corresponding provision will be made in Northern Ireland.

	Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	
	2010	*2011*
Attendance Allowance		
Higher rate	71.40	73.60
Lower rate	47.80	49.30
Bereavement Benefit		
Bereavement payment (lump sum)	2,000.00	2,000.00
Widowed parent's allowance	97.65	100.70
Bereavement Allowance		
Standard rate	97.65	100.70
Age-related		
age 54	90.81	93.65
53	83.98	86.60
52	77.14	79.55
51	70.31	72.50
50	63.47	65.46
49	56.64	58.41
48	49.80	51.36
47	42.97	44.31
46	36.13	37.26
45	29.30	30.21
Capital Limits - rules common to income support, income based jobseeker's allowance, income-related employment and support allowance, pension credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit unless stated otherwise		
Upper limit	16,000.00	16,000.00
Upper limit – pension credit guarantee credit and those getting hb/ctb and pension credit guarantee credit	No limit	No limit
Amount disregarded – all benefits except pension credit and housing benefit and council tax benefit for those above the qualifying age for guarantee credit	6,000.00	6,000.00
Amount disregarded – pension credit and housing benefit and council tax benefit for those above the qualifying age for pension credit	10,000.00	10,000.00
child disregard (not pension credit)	3,000.00	3,000.00
amt disregarded (living in RC/NH)	10,000.00	10,000.00
Tariff income		
£1 for every £250, or part thereof, between the amount of capital disregarded and the capital upper limit		
Tariff income – pension credit and hb/ctb where claimant/partner is over guarantee credit qualifying age		
£1 for every £500, or part thereof, between the amount of capital disregarded and capital upper limit		
Carer's Allowance	53.90	55.55
Council Tax Benefit		
Personal allowances		
Single		
18 to 24	51.85	53.45
25 or over	65.45	67.50
entitled to main phase ESA	65.45	67.50
lone parent	65.45	67.50
couple	102.75	105.95
dependent children	57.57	62.33
pensioner		
single/lone parent has attained the qualifying age for Pension Credit but under 65	132.60	137.35
couple – one or both has attained the qualifying age for Pension Credit but both under 65	202.40	209.70

	Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	
	2010	*2011*
single/lone parent—65 and over	153.15	157.90
couple—one or both 65 and over	229.50	236.80
Premiums		
Family	17.40	17.40
family (lone parent rate)	22.20	22.20
child under 1	10.50	10.50
Disability		
Single	28.00	28.85
Couple	39.85	41.10
enhanced disability		
single	13.65	14.05
disabled child	21.00	21.63
couple	19.65	20.25
severe disability		
Single	53.65	55.30
couple (lower rate)	53.65	55.30
couple (higher rate)	107.30	110.60
disabled child	52.08	53.62
Carer	30.05	31.00
ESA components		
work-related activity	25.95	26.75
Support	31.40	32.35
Alternative maximum Council Tax Benefit		
second adult on IS, JSA(IB), ESA(IR) or Pension Credit	25% of council tax	25% of council tax
first adult(s) student(s)	100% of council tax	100% of council tax
second adult's gross income:		
under £177.00	15% of council tax	15% of council tax
£177.00 to £230.99	7.5% of council tax	7.5% of council tax
Deductions—rules common to income support, jobseeker's allowance, employment and support allowance, pension credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit unless stated otherwise		
Non-dependant deductions from housing benefit and from IS, JSA(IB), ESA(IR) and Pension Credit aged 25 and over in receipt of IS and JSA(IB), in receipt of main phase ESA(IR),		
aged 18 or over, not in remunerative work	7.40	9.40
aged 18 or over and in remunerative work		
- gross income: less than £122.00	7.40	9.40
- gross income: £122 to £179.99	17.00	21.55
- gross income: £180 to £233.99	23.35	29.60
- gross income: £234 to £309.99	38.20	48.45
- gross income: £310 to £386.99	43.50	55.20
- gross income: £387 and above	47.75	60.60
Non-dependant deductions from council tax benefit		
aged 18 or over and in remunerative work		
- gross income: £387 or more	6.95	8.60
- gross income: £310 - £386.99	5.80	7.20
- gross income: £180 - £309.99	4.60	5.70
- gross income less than £180	2.30	2.85
others, aged 18 or over	2.30	2.85
Deductions from housing benefit		
Service charges for fuel		
Heating	21.55	21.55
hot water	2.50	2.50
Lighting	1.75	1.75
Cooking	2.50	2.50
Amount ineligible for meals		
three or more meals a day		
single claimant	23.35	24.05
each person in family aged 16 or over	23.35	24.05
each child under 16	11.80	12.15
less than three meals a day		
single claimant	15.50	16.00
each person in family aged 16 or over	15.50	16.00
each child under 16	7.80	8.05
breakfast only—claimant and each member of the family	2.85	2.95
Amount for personal expenses (not HB/CTB)	22.30	22.60
Third party deductions from IS, JSA(IB), ESA(IR) and Pension Credit for:		
arrears of housing, fuel and water costs council tax etc. and deductions for ELDS and ILS.	3.30	3.40
child support, contribution towards maintenance (CTM)		
standard deduction	6.60	6.80
lower deduction	3.30	3.40
arrears of Community Charge		
court order against claimant	3.30	3.40
court order against couple	5.15	5.30

	Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	
	2010	*2011*
fine or compensation order		
standard rate	5.00	5.00
lower rate	3.30	3.40
Maximum deduction rates for recovery of overpayments (not CTB/JSA(C)/ ESA(C))		
ordinary overpayments	9.90	10.20
where claimant convicted of fraud	13.20	13.60
Deductions from JSA(C) and ESA (C)		
Arrears of comm. charge, council tax, fines & overpayment recovery		
Age 16 – 24	17.28	17.81
Age 25 +	21.81	22.50
Max. deductions for arrears of child maintenance (CTM)		
Age 16 – 24	17.28	17.81
Age 25 +	21.81	22.50
Dependency Increases		
Adult dependency increases for spouse or person looking after children payable with:		
State pension on own insurance (Cat A or B)	57.05	58.80
Long-term incapacity benefit	53.10	54.75
Severe disablement allowance	31.90	32.90
Carers allowance	31.70	32.70
short-term incapacity benefit (over state pension age)	51.10	52.70
short-term incapacity benefit (under state pension age)	41.35	42.65
Child Dependency Increases – payable with:		
State pension; widowed mothers/parents allowance; short-term incapacity benefit – higher rate or over state pension age; long-term incapacity benefit; carer's allowance; severe disablement allowance; industrial death benefit (higher rate):	11.35	11.35
Note:		
The rate of child dependency increase is adjusted where it is payable for the eldest child for whom child benefit is also paid. The weekly rate in such cases is reduced by the difference (less £3.65) between the ChB rates for the eldest and subsequent children.	8.10	8.10
Disability Living Allowance		
Care Component		
Highest	71.40	73.60
Middle	47.80	49.30
Lowest	18.95	19.55
Mobility Component		
Higher	49.85	51.40
Lower	18.95	19.55
Disregards		
Housing benefit and council tax benefit		
Earnings disregards		
standard (single claimant)	5.00	5.00
Couple	10.00	10.00
higher (special occupations/ circumstances)	20.00	20.00
lone parent	25.00	25.00
childcare charges	175.00	175.00
childcare charges (2 or more children)	300.00	300.00
permitted work higher	93.00	95.00
permitted work lower	20.00	20.00
Other Income disregards		
adult maintenance disregard	15.00	15.00
war disablement pension and war widows pension	10.00	10.00
widowed mothers/parents allowance	15.00	15.00
Armed Forces Compensation Scheme	10.00	10.00
student loan	10.00	10.00
student's covenanted income	5.00	5.00
income from boarders (plus 50% of the balance)	20.00	20.00
additional earnings disregard	17.10	17.10
income from subtenants (£20 fixed from April 08)	20.00	20.00
Income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, income-related employment and support allowance and pension credit		
Earnings disregards		
standard (single claimant)	5.00	5.00
Couple	10.00	10.00
higher (special occupations/ circumstances)	20.00	20.00
Other Income disregards		
war disablement pension and war widows pension	10.00	10.00
widowed mothers/parents allowance	10.00	10.00
Armed Forces Compensation Scheme	10.00	10.00
student loan (not pension credit)	10.00	10.00
student's covenanted income (not pension credit)	5.00	5.00
income from boarders (plus 50% of the balance)	20.00	20.00
income from subtenants (£20 fixed from April 08)	20.00	20.00
Earnings Rules		
Carers allowance	100.00	100.00
Limit of earnings from councillor's allowance	93.00	95.00
Permitted work earnings limit		
Higher	93.00	95.00
Lower	20.00	20.00

	Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	
	2010	*2011*
Industrial injuries unemployability supplement permitted earnings level (annual amount)	4,836.00	4,940.00
Earnings level at which adult dependency (ADI) increases are affected with:		
short-term incapacity benefit where claimant is		
(a) under state pension age	41.35	42.65
(b) over state pension age	51.10	52.70
state pension, long term incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance, unemployability supplement – payable when dependant		
(a) is living with claimant	65.45	67.50
(b) still qualifies for the tapered earnings rule	45.09	45.09
Earnings level at which ADI is affected when dependent is not living with claimant:		
state pension,	57.05	58.80
long-term incapacity benefit,	53.10	54.75
unemployability supplement,	53.90	55.55
severe disablement allowance	31.90	32.90
Carers allowance	31.70	32.70
Earnings level at which child dependency increases are affected		
for first child	200.00	205.00
additional amount for each subsequent child	26.00	27.00
Pension income threshold for incapacity benefit	85.00	85.00
Pension income threshold for contributory employment support allowance	85.00	85.00
Employment and Support Allowance		
Personal allowances		
Single		
under 25	51.85	53.45
25 or over	65.45	67.50
lone parent		
under 18	51.85	53.45
18 or over	65.45	67.50
Couple		
both under 18	51.85	53.45
both under 18 with child	78.30	80.75
both under 18 (main phase)	65.45	67.50
both under 18 with child (main phase)	102.75	105.95
one 18 or over, one under 18	102.75	105.95
both over 18	102.75	105.95
claimant under 25, partner under 18	51.85	53.45
claimant 25 or over, partner under 18	65.45	67.50

	Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	
	2010	*2011*
claimant (main phase), partner under 18	65.45	67.50
Premiums		
enhanced disability		
Single	13.65	14.05
Couple	19.65	20.25
severe disability		
Single	53.65	55.30
couple (lower rate)	53.65	55.30
couple (higher rate)	107.30	110.60
Carer	30.05	31.00
pensioner		
single with WRAC	41.20	43.10
single with support component	35.75	37.50
single with no component	67.15	69.85
couple with WRAC	73.70	77.00
couple with support component	68.25	71.40
couple with no component	99.65	103.75
Components		
Work-related activity	25.95	26.75
Support	31.40	32.35
Housing Benefit		
Personal allowances		
Single		
under 25	51.85	53.45
25 or over	65.45	67.50
entitled to main phase ESA	65.45	67.50
lone parent		
under 18	51.85	53.45
18 or over	65.45	67.50
entitled to main phase ESA	65.45	67.50
Couple		
both under 18	78.30	80.75
one or both 18 or over	102.75	105.95
claimant entitled to main phase ESA	102.75	105.95
dependent children	57.57	62.33
pensioner		
single/lone parent has attained the qualifying age for pension credit but under 65	132.60	137.35
couple – one or both has attained the qualifying age for pension credit but both under 65	202.40	209.70
single/lone parent – 65 and over	153.15	157.90
couple – one or both 65 and over	229.50	236.80
Premiums		
family	17.40	17.40
family (lone parent rate)	22.20	22.20

	Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	
	2010	*2011*
child under 1	10.50	10.50
disability		
single	28.00	28.85
couple	39.85	41.10
enhanced disability		
single	13.65	14.05
disabled child	21.00	21.63
couple	19.65	20.25
severe disability		
single	53.65	55.30
couple (lower rate)	53.65	55.30
couple (higher rate)	107.30	110.60
disabled child	52.08	53.62
carer	30.05	31.00
ESA components		
work-related activity	25.95	26.75
support	31.40	32.35
Incapacity Benefit		
Long-term incapacity benefit	91.40	94.25
Short-term Incapacity Benefit (under state pension age)		
lower rate	68.95	71.10
higher rate	81.60	84.15
Short-term incapacity benefit (over state pension age)		
lower rate	87.75	90.45
higher rate	91.40	94.25
Increase of long-term incapacity benefit for age		
higher rate	15.00	13.80
lower rate	5.80	5.60
Invalidity allowance (Transitional)		
higher rate	15.00	13.80
middle rate	8.40	7.10
lower rate	5.45	5.60
Income Support		
Personal allowances		
single		
under 25	51.85	53.45
25 or over	65.45	67.50
lone parent		
under 18	51.85	53.45
18 or over	65.45	67.50
couple		
both under 18	51.85	53.45
both under 18 – higher rate	78.30	80.75
one under 18, one under 25	51.85	53.45
one under 18, one 25 and over	65.45	67.50
both 18 or over	102.75	105.95
dependent children	57.57	62.33
Premiums		
family/lone parent	17.40	17.40
pensioner (applies to couples only)	99.65	103.75
disability		
single	28.00	28.85
couple	39.85	41.10
enhanced disability		
single	13.65	14.05
disabled child	21.00	21.63
couple	19.65	20.25
severe disability		
single	53.65	55.30
couple (lower rate)	53.65	55.30
couple (higher rate)	107.30	110.60
disabled child	52.08	53.62
carer	30.05	31.00
Relevant sum for strikers	35.00	36.00
Industrial Death Benefit		
Widow's pension		
higher rate	97.65	102.15
lower rate	29.30	30.65
Widower's pension	97.65	102.15
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit		
18 and over, or under 18 with dependants		
100%	145.80	150.30
90%	131.22	135.27
80%	116.64	120.24
70%	102.06	105.21
60%	87.48	90.18
50%	72.90	75.15
40%	58.32	60.12
30%	43.74	45.09
20%	29.16	30.06
Under 18		
100%	89.35	92.10
90%	80.42	82.89
80%	71.48	73.68
70%	62.55	64.47

	Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	
	2010	*2011*
60%	53.61	55.26
50%	44.68	46.05
40%	35.74	36.84
30%	26.81	27.63
20%	17.87	18.42
Maximum life gratuity (lump sum)	9,680.00	9,980.00
Unemployability Supplement	90.10	92.90
increase for early incapacity		
higher rate	18.65	19.25
middle rate	12.00	12.40
lower rate	6.00	6.20
Maximum reduced earnings allowance	58.32	60.12
Maximum retirement allowance	14.58	15.03
Constant attendance allowance		
exceptional rate	116.80	120.40
intermediate rate	87.60	90.30
normal maximum rate	58.40	60.20
part-time rate	29.20	30.10
Exceptionally severe disablement allowance	58.40	60.20
Jobseeker's Allowance		
Contribution based JSA – Personal rates		
under 25	51.85	53.45
25 or over	65.45	67.50
Income-based JSA - personal allowances		
under 25	51.85	53.45
25 or over	65.45	67.50
lone parent		
under 18	51.85	53.45
18 or over	65.45	67.50
couple		
both under 18	51.85	53.45
both under 18 – higher rate	78.30	80.75
one under 18, one under 25	51.85	53.45
one under 18, one 25 and over	65.45	67.50
both 18 or over	102.75	105.95
dependent children	57.57	62.33
Premiums		
family/lone parent	17.40	17.40
pensioner		
single	67.15	69.85
couple	99.65	103.75
disability		
single	28.00	28.85
couple	39.85	41.10
enhanced disability		
single	13.65	14.05
disabled child	21.00	21.63
couple	19.65	20.25
severe disability		
single	53.65	55.30
couple (lower rate)	53.65	55.30
couple (higher rate)	107.30	110.60
disabled child	52.08	53.62
carer	30.05	31.00
Prescribed sum for strikers	35.00	36.00
Maternity Allowance		
Standard rate	124.88	128.73
MA threshold	30.00	30.00
Pension Credit		
Standard minimum guarantee		
single	132.60	137.35
couple	202.40	209.70
Additional amount for severe disability		
single	53.65	55.30
couple (one qualifies)	53.65	55.30
couple (both qualify)	107.30	110.60
Additional amount for carers	30.05	31.00
Savings credit		
threshold – single	98.40	103.15
threshold – couple	157.25	164.55
maximum – single	20.52	20.52
maximum – couple	27.09	27.09
Amount for claimant and first spouse in polygamous marriage	202.40	209.70
Additional amount for additional spouse	69.80	72.35
Pneumoconiosis, Byssinosis, and Miscellaneous Diseases Scheme and the Workmen's Compensation (Supplementation)		
Total disablement allowance and major incapacity allowance (maximum)	145.80	150.30
Partial disablement allowance	53.90	55.55
Unemployability supplement	90.10	92.90
increases for early incapacity -		

	Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	
	2010	*2011*
higher rate	18.65	19.25
middle rate	12.00	12.40
lower rate	6.00	6.20
Constant attendance allowance		
exceptional rate	116.80	120.40
intermediate rate	87.60	90.30
normal maximum rate	58.40	60.20
part-time rate	29.20	30.10
Exceptionally severe disablement allowance	58.40	60.20
Lesser incapacity allowance		
maximum rate of allowance	53.90	55.55
based on loss of earnings over	71.40	73.60
Severe Disablement Allowance		
Basic rate	59.45	62.95
Age-related addition (from Dec 90)		
Higher rate	15.00	13.80
Middle rate	8.40	7.10
Lower rate	5.45	5.60
State Pension		
Category A or B	97.65	102.15
Category B(lower) spouse or civil partner's insurance	58.50	61.20
Category C or D non-contributory	58.50	61.20
Additional pension	Increase by:	3.10%
Increments to:-		
Basic pension	Increase by.	3.10%
Additional pension	Increase by:	3.10%
Graduated Retirement Benefit (GRB)	Increase by:	3.10%
Inheritable lump sum	Increase by:	3.10%
Contracted-out Deduction from AP in respect of pre-April 1988 contracted-out earnings	Nil	Nil
Contracted-out Deduction from AP in respect of contracted-out earnings from April 1988 to 1997	Increase by:	3.00%

	Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	
	2010	*2011*
Graduated Retirement Benefit (unit)	6.1153	0.1189
Increase of long-term incapacity for age	Increase by:	3.10%
Addition at age 80	0.25	0.25
Increase of long-term incapacity for age		
higher rate	18.65	19.25
lower rate	9.35	9.65
Invalidity Allowance (Transitional) for State Pension recipients		
higher rate	18.65	19.25
middle rate	12.00	12.40
lower rate	6.00	6.20
Statutory Adoption Pay		
Earnings threshold	97.00	102.00
Standard Rate	124.88	128.73
Statutory Maternity Pay		
Earnings threshold	97.00	102.00
Standard rate	124.88	128.73
Statutory Paternity Pay		
Earnings threshold	97.00	102.00
Standard Rate	124.88	128.73
Statutory Sick Pay		
Earnings threshold	97.00	102.00
Standard rate	79.15	81.60
Widow's Benefit		
Widowed mother's allowance	97.65	100.70
Widow's pension		
standard rate	97.65	100.70
age-related[1]		
age 54 (49)	90.81	93.65
53 (48)	83.98	86.60
52 (47)	77.14	79.55
51 (46)	70.31	72.50
50 (45)	63.47	65.46
49 (44)	56.64	58.41
48 (43)	49.80	51.36
47 (42)	42.97	44.31
46 (41)	36.13	37.26
45 (40)	29.30	30.21

[1] For deaths occurring before 11 April 1988 refer to age-points shown in brackets.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 13 December 2010

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Local Enterprise Partnerships

The Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Mr Mark Prisk): I, together with the Minister of State with responsibility for decentralisation, my right hon. Friend the Member for Tunbridge Wells (Greg Clark), would like to inform the House that today we have written to the proposed black country, new Anglia (covering Norfolk and Suffolk), and Worcestershire local enterprise partnerships inviting them to put their governance arrangements in place.

Local enterprise partnerships see a real power shift away from central government and quangos and towards local communities and the local businesses who really understand the barriers to growth in their areas. This announcement brings the total number of partnerships so far invited to put their governance arrangements in place to 27. We will continue to work with other areas with a view to establishing further local enterprise partnerships across England.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Business Rates

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Robert Neill): This Government are clear that helping small shops and businesses grow is a crucial part of rebalancing and rebuilding the economy.

We have already taken action through the business rates system to support that aim.

We have doubled small business rate relief for one year. That measure is currently saving approximately half a million businesses £390 million in taxes, with over a third of a million ratepayers paying no rates at all for a year.

We are also waiving £175 million of backdated business rates demands levied on businesses, including some in ports. Thanks to that action many companies across the country will now be able to move forward confidently, unburdened by these unexpected debts. We will bring forward the necessary legislation to achieve that through the Localism Bill.

The Localism Bill will also simplify the process for claiming small business rate relief and give local authorities powers to provide business rates discounts which may be used, for example, to provide targeted support for local services or to help kick start regeneration schemes.

In addition, our proposals to enable councils to retain locally-raised business rates and deliver tax increment finance for local authorities will be taken forward through the local government resource review.

We fully appreciate the problems caused by the previous Government's reforms of empty property rates. We have therefore given careful consideration to empty property rates and the inflation linked (based on the September 2010 rate of RPI) increase for next year's bills

Our ability to take action on those matters needs to be balanced against the targeted support that we have already provided on business rates, the high costs involved—we estimate it would cost £400 million to continue with the temporary empty property rates measure—and the overriding need to reduce public expenditure and support the economy generally by reducing the deficit.

Unfortunately, taking those matters into consideration, any further help in the short term is currently unaffordable.

The empty property rates threshold will therefore revert to £2,600 from 1 April. The provisional small business non-domestic multiplier will be 42.6 p and the provisional non-domestic multiplier—which includes the supplement to fund small business rate relief—will be 43.3 p.

However, while we have no immediate plans to reverse the reforms, we will keep this under review and we want to work constructively with the property industry on this inherited problem.

We are determined to continue providing the support that businesses need.

Council Housing Finance

The Minister for Housing and Local Government (Grant Shapps): For far too long, councils have been frustrated in their efforts to meet the housing needs of their tenants by a discredited system for financing council housing. The spending review and our recently published "Local decisions: a fairer future for social housing" confirmed our intention to replace this financing system with a new approach that devolves power and sufficient resources to councils to enable them to offer a better service to their tenants. This delivers a commitment in the coalition agreement.

Under the current system, Whitehall makes a series of complex annual decisions about what councils should raise in rents and what they should spend on their homes. On the back of this, Government redistribute income between councils. The result is that councils have no certainty about future income, no ability to plan long term, and in practice few incentives to drive up efficiency.

We will replace this opaque, centralised system with one that provides a direct link between the rents councils charge, the money they spend, and the services they deliver. Under this system, tenants and local taxpayers will be able to hold their landlord to account for the cost and quality of their housing. We also estimate moving to self-financing would produce over £6 billion of efficiency savings over 30 years as councils are able to plan more effectively for the long term.

The Localism Bill will take powers to repeal the existing subsidy system and replace it with powers for the Secretary of State to introduce self-financing. Implementing these changes via legislation ensures all councils start on the same basis at the same time. Our intention is to bring about these changes from April 2012, subject to parliamentary approval. For 2011-12 we will continue to run the present system and have recently published draft determinations for each council for consultation.

This statement sets out the basis on which Government intend to implement these reforms. We are satisfied that self-financing is the right approach and represents a good deal for all authorities over the longer term. However, the success of self-financing depends on a fair valuation of their housing business that guarantees all councils receive a sustainable level of debt that they can afford. As such we will continue to finalise the precise details of the settlement over the next year to ensure they take account of any relevant changes in economic circumstances. The Government will then confirm that the settlement is fair and sustainable and should be implemented next year.

We propose to adopt the basic method for calculating the debt reallocation consulted upon in March, based on a 30-year notional business plan of income and expenditure for each landlord. A payment to or from each council will then be made to reflect the difference between the value of the business and the housing debt currently supported under the HRA. The income assumptions built into the valuation will be based on the existing social rent policy for councils that their rents should "converge" with standard housing association rents in 2015-16.

We will publish a policy document in the new year setting out how these proposed reforms are envisaged to work in practice, together with the underpinning model which will include updated indicative numbers per council. This much more detailed information will provide Parliament and local authorities with the opportunity to assess these proposals and their likely impact at the same time as they scrutinise the powers proposed to support them during passage of the Bill.

This policy document will set out the updated methodology in more detail and will incorporate the following parameters:

a discount rate of 6.5% for calculating the net present value of each council's housing business;

providing for realistic expenditure for management, maintenance and major repairs as identified in independent research published last year, increasing the costs used in the valuation by an average of 11.7%;

£116 million of extra funding each year for councils to pay for disabled adaptations to their stock;

funding for Treasury management costs and to reflect planned demolitions;

Government continuing to pay subsidy to local authorities for the PFI schemes currently funded through the HRA;

75% of net receipts from any right-to-buy sales continuing to be returned to the Exchequer. Estimates of the loss of income from RTB sales will be built into the valuation of each council's housing business. Receipts from other disposals will continue to be held locally to spend on affordable housing or regeneration; and

council landlords being subject to a cap on overall housing borrowing for each local authority. This cap will be linked to the opening debt level under self-financing.

Using today's figures, economic assumptions and these parameters, the net receipt to the Exchequer from these transactions is projected at approximately £6.5 billion. These will be updated in the model issued alongside the policy document and before the implementation of self-financing using the latest data and economic assumptions.

This projected receipt includes £1.2 billion attributable to the decision to continue funding PFI separately. Local authorities with PFI schemes will share this extra amount but will continue to receive subsidy. This was the option preferred by all local authorities with PFI schemes.

This is a reform intended to endure for the long term. In order to ensure it continues to be viable the Government are committed to assessing over the long term the impact of policy changes that may affect landlord income and the case to make good any losses or address any gains. The Localism Bill contains a power for the Secretary of State to make a further adjustment to the debt allocated to local authorities if a future policy change has a significant material effect on their costs or income. This is designed to protect both councils and the Exchequer.

Some council may be considering taking forward housing transfer proposals with their tenants in advance of or post self-financing. In order to agree a transfer in future, the financial terms of any proposals will need to be clearly comparable with what self-financing would provide. The Government will consider transfer proposals against the costs under self-financing. This will include dealing with backlogs, the costs of future management, maintenance and major repairs and the costs of essential regeneration works due to be undertaken through the proposed transfer. There will be an expectation that councils must provide significant financial support for the transfer, and no assumptions of financial benefit should be made where some measure of Government support may be required. Proposals will be subject to a rigorous value-for-money assessment.

Localism Bill

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Mr Eric Pickles): I am today introducing the Localism Bill to Parliament. The legislation will set the foundations for the big society by radically transforming the relationships between central government, local government, communities and individuals. The provisions will devolve greater power and freedoms to councils and neighbourhoods, establish powerful new rights for communities, revolutionise the planning system, and give communities much more control over housing decisions.

The Bill will expand councils' freedom to act in the interest of their local communities through a new general power of competence. This long-awaited new power will mean that rather than needing to rely on specific powers, councils will have the legal reassurance and confidence to innovate and drive down costs to deliver more efficient services.

Powers for councils will be accompanied by greater powers for local people to hold their local authorities to account and to shape their local area. There will be a new right to challenge to take over services; a new right to bid to buy assets of community value such as libraries, public houses and shops; and a new right to veto excessive council tax rises through a referendum.

The Bill also contains significant reform of the planning system. It will replace the Infrastructure Planning Commission with an efficient and democratically accountable system for major infrastructure. It will enable regional planning to be swept away and, in its place, neighbourhood plans will become the new building blocks of the planning system with communities having the power to grant planning permission if a majority of electors are in favour.

The Bill will return decision-making powers on housing to local councils, giving them much greater control over allocation and tenure of social housing and the flexibility to use their social housing stock to the maximum effect and reduce waiting lists. It will enable a new national home swap scheme that will make it easier for social tenants to relocate. The housing revenue account subsidy system will be replaced with a more transparent system that serves local communities. The Tenant Services Authority will be abolished but its vital economic regulation functions will be preserved.

The Bill will create powerful incentives for economic growth by allowing local authorities to grant discretionary business rate discounts. Its provisions will also make small business tax breaks easier to take advantage of and give affected businesses a greater say in rate supplements.

Finally, the Bill will take forward a new settlement for London which will devolve significant power to the Greater London authority and London boroughs and streamline the plethora of agencies in London's public sector landscape.

Taken together, the measures in the Bill will give local government the freedom and powers to deliver the key front-line services people rely on and make important savings.

EDUCATION

Education Spending

The Secretary of State for Education (Michael Gove): Today I am announcing local authority allocations for their Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and capital for 2011-12 and for the Early Intervention Grant in 2011-12 and 2012-13.

Schools

I can confirm that, as proposed in our consultation, we will continue with the current distribution method for funding local authorities.

As signalled in the consultation, we are simplifying the funding system by mainstreaming relevant grants into the DSG on the same per pupil distribution as this year. 2011-12 guaranteed units of funding (GUFs) are therefore the sum of 2010-11 GUFs and the per pupil grant allocations. This means that at local authority level allocations for school funding are flat cash per pupil for 2011-12.

To protect those local authorities that have falling pupil numbers I have put in place arrangements so that no authority will lose more than 2% of its budget in cash terms compared with 2010-11.

Following this announcement, local authorities will now be able to work with their schools forums to produce 2011-12 budgets for their maintained schools. This will include resources from grants mainstreamed into DSG. Local authorities will be required to take account of the previous level of these grants in constructing their settlement for schools. This is to prevent turbulence for those schools who have previously received funding through grants that we are mainstreaming. Although the overall schools budget before the addition of the pupil premium will stay at the same level per pupil, the actual level of budget for each individual school will vary. It will depend on local decisions about how best to meet needs. This does mean that some individual schools may see cash cuts in their budgets—either because they have fewer pupils or because changes are made within local authorities to the distribution of funding. I have, therefore, decided to apply a national protection arrangement for schools—the minimum funding guarantee—and have set it so that no school will see a reduction compared with its 2010-11 budget (excluding sixth form funding) of more than 1.5% per pupil before the pupil premium is applied. The guarantee applies to a school's overall 2010-11 budget including grants that have been mainstreamed into DSG.

Capital

The capital settlement for my Department was extremely tight, with a 60% reduction in 2014-15 compared to the historic high of 2010-11. I know that there are schools in need of refurbishment which have missed out from previous Government capital programmes, and who feel they have therefore been treated unfairly. I will continue to invest in the school estate. Indeed we are investing £15.8 billion of capital over the spending review period, and the average annual capital budget over the period will be higher than the average annual capital budget in the 1997-98 to 2004-05 period. However, over the next few years our priority is to reduce this country's budget deficit. This is essential, as the amount we are currently spending on debt interest payments could be used to rebuild or refurbish 10 schools every day. However, I realise that in the short term it will be difficult for schools to adjust to reduced capital funding.

The recommendations from the Sebastian James review of DFE's capital programmes will inform the allocation of capital from 2012-13. But schools and local authorities need information now on capital for 2011-12 so that they can begin to plan. I am today announcing the allocation of £2.137 million[1] of capital funding for schools in 2011-12.

There are two particular pressures we face which have informed how I have allocated this funding. First, I have inherited substantial forward commitments for the Building Schools for the Future, academy and myplace projects which I did not stop in July. Energetic efforts are being made by local authorities, contractors and others to reduce the cost of these projects, but I expect the cost of these commitments to remain significant over the spending review period. If the Building Schools for the Future programme had not been stopped there would have been no additional funding for schools outside that programme or for urgently needed primary school places.

Secondly, there are significant pressures for additional school places, particularly at primary age, in many areas of the country because of rising birth rates and changed migration patterns. In 2011-12, £800 million will be available to local authorities to address the need to provide additional school places. I have doubled the amount to be spent on what is called basic need from the levels spent by the previous Government. I recognise that this issue needs to be addressed and I am supporting local areas to do so.

Even where funding is tight, it is essential that buildings and equipment are properly maintained, to ensure that health and safety standards are met, and to prevent a backlog of decay building up which is very expensive to address. Therefore, in 2011-12, £1,337 million will be available for capital maintenance for schools[2], with over £1 billion being allocated for local areas to prioritise according to maintenance need. The voluntary aided sector will receive its fair share of this as I have decided to retain the Locally Co-ordinated VA Programme for a further year.

In addition, £195 million will be allocated directly to schools[3] for their own use. This is a much lower rate than previously. The Audit Commission criticised the allocation of large amounts of funding to schools that was not targeted to building need. Therefore, in view of the need to prioritise, I have balanced the bulk of maintenance funding to local authorities, to support local prioritisation and larger projects, with co-ordinated and efficient procurement.

Details of the allocations of basic need and maintenance funding to each authority, and indicative amounts of the capital allocations for their schools, are being sent to local authorities today and published on the website. I shall also make copies available in the parliamentary Libraries.

I know that for longer-term planning, local authorities would welcome further security on their capital funding from 2012-13. As I have said, the capital review will inform funding from 2012-13. However, while the methodology of allocation and management of the capital funding may change, I can confirm that the headline annual amounts of funding for basic need and for maintenance will for 2012-13 until 2014-15 be in line with the amounts I have announced today for 2011-12.

Local Authority Early Intervention Grant

In challenging times the Government are freeing local authorities to focus on essential front-line services, and to invest in early intervention and prevention to produce long-term savings and better results for children, young people and families. A key element of this approach is the creation of a new early intervention grant for local authorities in England, worth £2,212 million in 2011-12 and £2,297 million in 2012-13. It replaces a number of former funding streams, which are listed in a note on my Department's website. In a tight funding settlement, some reduction in central government support was inevitable. In 2011-12, the amount to be allocated through EIG is 10.9% lower than the aggregated 2010-11 funding through the predecessor grants. The new grant will however provide a substantial funding stream, with new flexibility to enable local authorities to act more strategically and target investment early, where it will have the greatest impact.

Universal as well as specialist services have an important role to play in identifying and supporting families who need extra help before problems escalate, and helping them get more intensive support if needed. Our schools, health services, police and other services should all be concerned to spot and support the most vulnerable families early. There are great examples of effective partnerships which already do this across the country.

I want to draw attention to two important aspects of the new grant. The first is the Government's commitment to trusting professionals and creating local flexibility. Greater freedom at local level, to pool and align funding will help local authorities and their partners achieve better results. That is why we have scrapped top-down performance management, and why we are reducing radically the number of ring-fenced grants. The spending review signalled a power shift between central and local government—ensuring local communities have a greater say in the issues that affect them. The EIG is not ring-fenced, giving local authorities the flexibility to respond to local needs and drive reform, while supporting a focus on early intervention across the age range.

The second key point is the Government's commitment to investment and reform in early intervention at a time of financial constraint. Against the background of greater flexibility to decide priorities locally, there are key areas of early intervention where the Government are ensuring that the overall grant provides support:

> *Sure Start Children's Centres.* There is enough money in the EIG to maintain the existing network of Sure Start Children's Centres, accessible to all but identifying and supporting families in greatest need. Local authorities continue to have duties under the Childcare Act 2006 to consult before opening, closing or significantly changing children's centres and to secure sufficient provision to meet local need and Together for Children will be ready to assist LAs in making plans to keep centres open. Important new investment through Department of Health budgets to provide 4,200 extra health visitors, working alongside outreach and family support workers, will enable stronger links with local health services.
>
> *2-year olds.* Evidence shows that early education is particularly beneficial for the most disadvantaged, for whom gaps in attainment start to appear as early as 22 months. We want to make sure that the poorest two year olds are given the best start, and subject to parliamentary approval have committed to extending free early education with an entitlement for disadvantaged two year olds from 2013, funded by an additional £300 million a year by 2014-15. £64 million and £223 million will be available through the EIG over the next two years so that authorities can build capacity and quality. Local authorities must still have regard to their statutory duties under the Childcare Act 2006 to provide information, training and advice to all providers of early education; quality matters and a highly skilled workforce is critical if we are to have a positive impact on social mobility.
>
> *Short breaks for disabled children.* Providing respite to the most vulnerable families improves their outcomes and reduces the cost of care. That is why we have included within the EIG £198 million/£202 million, at the same time as investing directly in the voluntary and community organisations that support this work.

The early intervention grant is of course not limited to these areas. The grant underpins creative local approaches to local priorities, across the whole field of services for children, young people and families. Most Department for Education funding for services for young people will flow through EIG. As we maintain the commitment to raise the participation age to 18 by 2015, the grant will help local authorities to support vulnerable young people to engage in education and training, intervening early with those who are at risk of disengagement. This could include preventing young people from taking part in risky behaviour, like crime, substance misuse or teenage pregnancy, supporting young people at risk of mental health problems, and helping young people who have a learning difficulty or disability to participate and achieve. The grant will support transitional arrangements to ensure that young people have access to impartial careers guidance in advance of the all-age careers service being fully operational. EIG also provides an opportunity for local areas to pursue greater coherence of local services for families with complex needs who face the poorest outcomes and pose the greatest cost to local services. Local authorities will want to consider using EIG funds to support local action in support of the national campaign to improve outcomes for families with multiple and complex problems and reduce costs to welfare and public services.

We look forward to Graham Allen's report on early intervention, which will identify best practice and suggest ways to make it more widespread, including through new funding mechanisms. We recognise that making the transition from the old grant regime, and investing in early intervention at a time when budgets are under pressure, will be demanding. We want to work in partnership with local government to make the case for investment in these vital areas of early intervention. To that end, we will continue to work with the sector, including organisations like C4EO, to develop and disseminate the evidence base. We will promote transparency by working with the sector to measure the key outcomes and incentivise reform and effectiveness through payment of local authorities and providers by results, working with a number of authorities to develop a fair and effective methodology.

I am writing to local authority chief executives, directors of children's services, head teachers and chairs of governing bodies with details of this announcement. Copies of these letters with details of individual school and local authority allocations have been placed in Libraries of both Houses.

Other Area-Based and Specific Grants

This Government's decision to prioritise and protect front-line spending on schools and to target local authority spending on vulnerable and deprived children, young people and families has meant that we have had to make some hard choices. As part of the local government announcement we have confirmed that we are ending a number of education related area-based and specific grants. The ending of these grants does not mean that we do not see a future role for local authorities in relation to schools. The White Paper, "The Importance of Teaching", which I recently published makes clear that local authorities continue to have an important strategic role to play. Local authorities will need to prioritise services and look at opportunities for delivering services more cost effectively including through working in conjunction with other local authorities.

In other areas, although the current grants are ending, we do expect to continue to provide funding. The White Paper made it clear that we are committed to improving music education. Darren Henley is currently conducting a review of music and we will make announcements about future music funding in the light of recommendations which arise from the review.

We want all families to be able to choose the right school for their child. We are therefore reviewing home to school transport so that we can better meet the needs of not only disadvantaged families, but all families, ensuring transport is properly targeted to those that need it most. In relation to the grant which supports extended rights for free home to school travel, we will be announcing transition funding in the new year to enable local authorities to continue to deliver their duty in this area for the rest of this academic year, pending the outcome of the review.

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[1] This includes all taxpayer funded schools, including in the VA sector, academies, city technology colleges and non-maintained special schools. The figure for local authority and voluntary aided schools is £2039 million.

[2] This includes all taxpayer funded schools, including in the VA sector, academies, city technology colleges and non-maintained special schools. The figure for local authority schools is £858 million and for voluntary aided schools, £196 million. Local authority maintenance allocations also include funding for maintenance of Sure Start children's centres.

[3] This includes all taxpayer funded schools, including in the VA sector and academies. The figure for local authority and voluntary aided schools is £185 million.

School Funding (Pupil Premium)

The Secretary of State for Education (Michael Gove): I can today confirm that the total funding available for the pupil premium will be £625 million in 2011-12, rising each year until 2014-15 when it will be worth £2.5 billion. The pupil premium, a key coalition priority, will target extra money at pupils from deprived backgrounds—pupils we know under-achieve compared to their non-deprived peers—in order to support them in reaching their potential.

In 2011-12, the pupil premium will be allocated to those pupils eligible for free school meals. We have chosen this indicator because it directly targets pupils and because the link between FSM eligibility and low attainment is strong. However, we aim from 2012-13 to extend the reach of the premium to those who have previously been on free school meals.

The level of the pupil premium will be £430 per pupil and will be the same for every deprived pupil, no matter where they live. The Coalition's objective is to reform the underlying funding system to ensure that over time deprived children in every part of the country receive the same level of support. We will consult on how best to meet this objective.

The funding for the pupil premium is in addition to the underlying schools budget, which will be at the same cash per pupil level for 2011-12 as this year. This means there will be an additional £430 for every child known to be eligible for free school meals in any school from next year. This is clear additional money to help the very poorest who were let down by the last Government.

This additional funding will be passed straight to schools and because we have not ring-fenced it at school level, schools will have freedom to employ the strategies that they know will support their pupils to increase their attainment.

In allocating the pupil premium, we have also recognised that looked after children face additional barriers to reaching their potential, so these pupils too will receive a premium of £430. The premium for looked after children will rise in subsequent years, in line with the premium for deprived pupils.

For both looked after children and deprived pupils in non-mainstream settings we will pay this funding to the authority that has the responsibility of care for the child and will give local authorities additional freedoms to distribute the funding in the way they see best for the provision of support for these pupils. The pupil premium will be paid to academies and free schools by the YPLA.

Last week, the Prime Minister announced that we are also providing a premium for the children of armed services personnel. Service children—many of whose parents are risking their lives for their country—face unique challenges and stresses. The premium will provide extra funding to schools with service children to support the schools in meeting these needs. We expect the focus of expenditure from the premium to be on pastoral support. Today I am pleased to announce that the level of this premium will be £200 in 2011-12.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Post-EU Energy Council

The Minister of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change (Charles Hendry): Andy Lebrecht, Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU, represented the UK at the Energy Council in Brussels on 3 December.

Ministers at the Energy Council adopted Council conclusions on a consumer energy policy and on the Commission's recent communication on the safety of offshore oil and gas activities. Commissioner Oettinger commented on the conclusions that he wanted to raise EU standards on offshore oil and gas activities to those of the best.

The main focus of the Energy Council was a debate on the recently published Commission documents, the "Energy 2020" strategy and the communication on energy infrastructure priorities. Commissioner Oettinger presented the two communications and outlined the Commission's priorities, including ensuring energy savings, speeding up authorisation procedures for infrastructure; and stressing the need for the EU to speak as one when dealing with its primary supply markets in the middle East, the Caspian and Russia.

Ministers broadly agreed with the Commission's documents. There was a strong consensus on the need for progress on energy efficiency although a number of member states argued against the idea of national binding targets. Member states agreed with the Commission on the crucial need for large investments in energy infrastructure but while broadly accepting the need to explore how planning and authorisation procedures, particularly for cross-border projects, could be improved, some, including the UK, noted that these were matters for member states. The UK and several other member states emphasised the importance of implementing the Third Package of internal energy market rules to facilitate the development of infrastructure. There were conflicting views on the financing of new infrastructure with some member states supporting the Commission's ideas of co-financing while others objected to the idea of EU funding. The UK and a number of other member states raised concerns over the idea of harmonising renewable support schemes. On external relations, most member states took a cautious approach to the Commission's proposals for a greater role for the EU.

The UK noted the opportunity of the European Council in February (where energy is planned to be a major item) to set a vision for a low-carbon, energy-secure, competitive EU by 2050 and the direction of EU energy and related policies to secure the necessary transformation, highlighting energy efficiency, technology, infrastructure and external policy as the key issues for Heads to discuss. In summing up, the presidency noted a level of consensus on the broad priorities in the Commission documents and the key issues for the February Council.

Commissioner Oettinger then updated the Council on a number of international energy relations events—the EU-US Energy Council, the EU-Russia energy dialogue and Belarus-Russia developments on gas.

In the morning of the Council, the UK and representatives from Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland, Luxembourg, Denmark and Norway signed a memorandum of understanding on the North sea's offshore grid initiative, which sets out a programme of work to facilitate the development of offshore wind resources in the region.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Parliamentary Written Question (Correction)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr Henry Bellingham): I regret that the answer I gave to the right hon. Member for Rotherham (Mr MacShane), to parliamentary question 22801, *Official Report*, 11 November 2010, Vol. 518 column 435W, on diplomatic immunity was incomplete.

The answer originally published was as follows:

Mr Bellingham: Whether a visiting Minister of a foreign Government is entitled to immunity from arrest in the UK will depend on the status of the person concerned, whether they are travelling on official Government business, as well as on other considerations. By virtue of their office, immunities will attach to visiting Heads of State, Heads of Government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs, as well as, by extension, other Ministers who travel by virtue of their office. The extent to which such immunities may attach to other visiting senior officials will fall to be determined case-by-case depending on their status and the reasons for their visit to the UK.

The answer should have been preceded by the following additional information:

There are various forms of immunity that may operate in proceedings before UK courts, including, State immunity, diplomatic immunity and special missions immunity. State and diplomatic immunity are addressed in legislation; special missions immunity derives from customary international law. Each of these aspects of immunity have been addressed in UK court judgments, to which reference must be made when determining whether immunity applies in any given case.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Police Authority Grants (England and Wales)

The Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice (Nick Herbert): I have today placed in the Library my proposals for the aggregate amount of grant to police authorities (referred to in the report as the Police Core Settlement) in England and Wales for 2011-12, for the approval of the House. I have also given an indication of how I intend to allocate Home Office funding for the years 2012-13 to 2014-15, for which approval will be sought at a later date. My intention in doing so is to provide police forces with the best possible information to support their financial planning.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has today also set out his proposals for police funding for the next two years. For the second two years, in England, the Local Government Resource Review may have implications for how the wider funding of local government is allocated for police authorities. The review will conclude in July 2011 and will signal the Government's intentions for the future.

The Welsh Assembly Government are also setting out today their proposals for the next two years of funding for the four police authorities in Wales.

To ensure a simple, transparent and equal share of reductions to the Police Core Settlement, funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government and from the Welsh Assembly (which together comprise the majority of Government funding to police authorities), these allocations have been damped in 2011-12 and 2012-13 at the level of the average reduction.

This means that every police authority will see a cash reduction in this funding of 5.1% in 2011-12 and 6.7% in 2012-13. I understand that the police service is already planning on this basis and—as in previous years—I will ensure that Welsh forces receive equal damping treatment to their English counterparts. When funding for specific grants is added to this, the total cash reduction in core Government funding to the police remains 4% in 2011-12 and 5% in 2012-13, as announced on 20 October.

Damping levels for the last two years of the settlement will be decided at a later date.

These reductions will be challenging but the Government are clear that forces can make the necessary savings while protecting the front line and prioritising the visibility and availability of policing.

The Government will play their part through continuing work with authorities and forces on value for money, including more effective procurement at national level, greater collaboration between force and other partners, and better use of comparative information; through the removal of unnecessary bureaucracy which adds costs and impedes a sharp focus on front-line policing; through its policy for public sector pay; and through careful consideration in due course of the recommendations from Tom Winsor's current independent review of police remuneration and conditions.

In order to give greater local freedom and flexibility over how resources are deployed locally there will be a significant reduction in the funding allocated by means of specific grants. Specifically, the Rule 2 Grant, Crime Fighting Fund and the Basic Command Unit Fund have all been absorbed within the Police Main Grant.

I will continue to provide a specific Neighbourhood Policing Fund for the first two years of the settlement period. This recognises that neighbourhood policing provides a dedicated, consistent and visible presence in communities. From 2013-14, the new directly elected Police And Crime Commissioners will have full discretion over this funding, recognising their accountability to the communities they serve. In London, the Metropolitan police authority will have full autonomy over this funding from 2011-12, in recognition of the role the Mayor of London and the Deputy Mayor, Policing, already play.

I will also be keeping specific funding for counter-terrorism policing and have provided relative protection to this budget to ensure that critical national counter-terrorism capabilities are maintained. Authorities and forces will receive more details of their specific counter-terrorism allocations in January.

In addition to the Police Core Settlement, the Olympic safety and security budget has been prioritised. These provisions are detailed below.

I have set aside £50 million in 2012-13 to fund the first elections of Police and Crime Commissioners in that year. This amount was specifically included in the police settlement for this purpose and has therefore had no impact on allocations to forces. I have likewise set aside funding for the continuation of police private finance initiative projects.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will today make a statement on his approach to council tax increases and capping next year. He will also announce details of the outstanding capping action to be taken against Greater Manchester and Nottinghamshire police authorities.

The Police Grant Settlement 2011-12 to 2014-15

I have set out below how I propose to allocate the police settlement between the different funding streams for the next four financial years.

Table 1 Police revenue funding—proposed figures for 2011-12 and indicative figures for 2012-13 to 2014-15

	2011-12 *£m*	*2012-13* *£m*	*2013-14* *£m*	*2014-15* *£m*
Total Formula Funding				
comprising				
Home Office police main grant	4,579	4,251	4,515	4,429
National, international and capital city grant (MPS only)	200	189	185	183
DCLG general grant	3,345	3,138	3,093[1]	3,051[1]
WAG general grant	161	151	149	147
Total Specific Grants				
comprising				
Welsh top-up	13	13	20	20
Neighbourhood Policing Fund (NPF)	340	338	-	-
Counter-terrorism specific grant	567	564	563	562
Council tax (2011-12) freeze grant	75	75	75	75
PCC election funding	-	50	-	-
PFI grants	54	54	60	79
Total Government Funding	*9,341*	*8,830*	*8,660*	*8,546*
% cash change in total Government funding	-4	-5	-2[2]	-1[2]

[1] How this funding is paid to the police may change as a result of potential changes to the retention of business rates.

[2] This includes a small amount of funding that will form part of a contingency fund, which is not shown in the table above.

Indicative allocations of these grants (with the exception of counter-terrorism funding) for each force in England and Wales for 2011-12 and 2012-13 are set out in table 3, and for 2013-14 and 2014-15 are set out in table 4.

Police Allocation Formula

I have taken into consideration representations made as part of the public consultation into the Police Allocation Formula. As a result, I have made three technical changes. These are the consolidation of Rule 2 grant; the inclusion of bar density data at CSP level; and the use of more up-to-date data to determine activity based costings. Details of these changes will be given to all forces with their allocations.

Specific Grants

Indicative amounts of these grants are set out in table 3.

Neighbourhood Policing Fund

The Neighbourhood Policing Fund specific grant will continue until directly elected police and crime commissioners are in place. Funding totalling £340 million in 2011-12 and £338 million in 2012-13 will be made available. Approximately 90% of the grant will be ring-fenced for PCSOs—contributing up to 75% of their salary costs. The remaining 25% will need to be match-funded by the police, councils, businesses and other organisations. This will not apply to the Metropolitan Police Authority who will have full discretion on the spending of this funding from 2011-12. From 2013-14 this fund will be consolidated into the Police Main Grant.

Counter-Terrorism

Counter-terrorism has been prioritised to ensure that the police will have the necessary resources to respond to the changing demands posed by the terrorist threat. We have allocated £567 million to support counter-terrorism policing in 2011-12.

Forces will be notified of their individual allocations in early January. For security reasons, these allocations will not be available in the public domain.

Private Finance Initiatives Grant

Specific funding will be given to cover the costs of private finance initiative projects which are currently operational and where grants are being paid in 2010-11, and for projects that become operational in 2011-12. The Home Office will continue to support projects that are currently in procurement.

National, International and Capital City Grant

The National, International and Capital City Grant will continue to recognise the unique additional duties performed by the Metropolitan police service. In 2011-12 the funding will be £200 million. It will be reduced in subsequent years on the same basis as the Police Main Grant.

Council Tax Freeze

Funding was made available in the police spending review settlement to help police authorities deliver a council tax freeze in 2011-12. Should every authority participate in the freeze, it is estimated that they will receive a total of around £75 million in each of the next four years to compensate for income that they would otherwise have raised from council tax. Funding for this was included in the police settlement, and has been set aside accordingly.

Other Funding

Police Capital

I am today also setting out capital allocations for forces over the next four years. Police capital will be at 55% of its current level by 2014-15. In 2011-12 more pressing capital priorities within the Home Office mean that it will be reduced to 40% of its level this year, however I have ensured that the police service will be compensated through an increase in capital funding in the following financial year.

I intend to allocate the majority of this funding directly to police authorities/PCCs, who will all receive the same % change in funding, as set out in table 5. I will also continue to support the National Police Air Service and maintain a capital contingency.

Table 2: Division of police capital between funding streams

	2011-12 £m	2012-13 £m	2013-14 £m	2014-15 £m
Capital Grant	85	125	115	115
National Police Air Service	4	4	4	4
Special Grant Capital	1	1	1	1
Total	90	130	120	120

Olympic Safety and Security

Safety and security for the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics is a priority for this Government. Safety and security planning is well advanced and on schedule.

In accordance with the commitment made by the then Minister for the Olympics in 2007, the Government will make up to £600 million available, if required, for the Olympic safety and security programme. Since 2007 the Home Office has identified significant financial savings and the Government believe that it will be possible to continue to make further savings without creating additional risk. At this stage, with almost two years before the games begin, we estimate that it should be possible to deliver the core cross-Government safety and security programme for about £475 million.

Beyond the £134 million which will have been spent by the Home Office by the end of the current financial year, the Home Office will be providing £107 million in 2011-12 and £192 million in 2012-13, primarily for the police service, to meet the Olympic safety and security costs. This funding is in addition to the core police funding detailed above and the contributions being made by other Government Departments. Home Office funding includes a very substantial financial provision for contingencies.

We assess this funding will be sufficient to meet the anticipated cost of delivering the capability and capacity that will be required to ensure a safe and secure Olympics and Paralympics. A further Olympic contingency of around £500 million is available for cross-programme issues, including a material change in circumstances relating to Olympic safety and security.

Venue security is a shared responsibility of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), as the event organiser, and the Government, as the guarantor of security for the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and a further investment of about £280 million will also be made available for the specific purpose of supporting the (LOCOG) in their responsibilities to secure Olympic venues before and throughout the games.

The Olympic safety and security operation will depend heavily on the existing substantial investment which the Government have made in counter-terrorism policing and infrastructure. We are committed to providing

£567 million in 2011-12 and £564 million in 2012-13 for counter-terrorism policing capabilities: much of this capacity will be devoted to the Olympics in 2012.

Table 3. Provisional and Indicative revenue allocations for English and Welsh Police Authorities for 2011-12 and 2012-13

Police Authority	*2011-12*					*2012-13*				
	HO Core	*NPF*	*Welsh Top up*	*WAG*	*CLG £m*	*HO Core*	*NPF*	*Welsh Top up*	*WAG*	*CLG £m*
Avon and Somerset	120.9	7.4	0.0	0.0	64.3	112.7	7.3	0.0	0.0	60.2
Bedfordshire	43.9	2.8	0.0	0.0	29.3	40.8	2.7	0.0	0.0	27.4
Cambridgeshire	53.7	3.7	0.0	0.0	29.7	50.0	3.6	0.0	0.0	27.8
Cheshire	69.5	4.8	0.0	0.0	53.2	64.3	4.8	0.0	0.0	50.2
City of London	31.6	1.3	0.0	0.0	29.9	30.2	1.3	0.0	0.0	27.3
Cleveland	51.4	3.0	0.0	0.0	46.3	47.5	2.9	0.0	0.0	43.6
Cumbria	33.1	2.3	0.0	0.0	36.1	30.5	2.3	0.0	0.0	34.0
Derbyshire	70.2	3.7	0.0	0.0	45.8	65.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	43.2
Devon and Cornwall	118.9	7.5	0.0	0.0	72.3	110.5	7.5	0.0	0.0	67.9
Dorset	45.9	3.3	0.0	0.0	21.0	42.4	3.2	0.0	0.0	20.0
Durham	47.8	3.3	0.0	0.0	44.4	44.3	3.3	0.0	0.0	41.7
Dyfed-Powys	34.3	1.6	6.5	17.1	0.0	32.1	1.6	6.3	15.7	0.0
Essex	117.6	7.2	0.0	0.0	6507	109.5	7.2	0.0	0.0	61.5
Gloucestershire	39.1	3.2	0.0	0.0	22.4	36.2	3.2	0.0	0.0	21.1
Greater London Authority	1,127.7	161.9	0.0	0.0	897.8	1,051.6	101.3	0.0	0.0	838.2
Greater Manchester	248.5	17.4	0.0	0.0	220.0	230.2	17.3	0.0	0.0	206.9
Gwent	48.2	3.0	0.0	35.1	0.0	44.7	2.9	0.0	33.0	0.0
Hampshire	138.0	7.6	0.0	0.0	74.3	128.1	7.6	0.0	0.0	69.9
Hertfordshire	79.5	5.3	0.0	0.0	44.5	73.9	5.3	0.0	0.0	41.8
Humberside	74.8	4.8	0.0	0.0	55.5	69.5	4.7	0.0	0.0	52.1
Kent	117.9	8.1	0.0	0.0	81.6	109.5	8.0	0.0	0.0	76.6
Lancashire	114.3	8.2	0.0	0.0	92.7	105.7	8.2	0.0	0.0	87.5
Leicestershire	72.4	4.7	0.0	0.0	48.0	67.3	4.7	0.0	0.0	45.0
Lincolnshire	42.9	2.9	0.0	0.0	24.6	39.8	2.9	0.0	0.0	23.1
Merseyside	137.8	9.9	0.0	0.0	133.5	127.0	9.8	0.0	0.0	126.1
Norfolk	57.7	4.0	0.0	0.0	33.1	53.7	3.9	0.0	0.0	31.0
North Wales	49.6	3.3	6.5	27.0	0.0	46.2	3.3	6.5	24.8	0.0
North Yorkshire	47.2	3.4	0.0	0.0	31.7	43.9	3.4	0.0	0.0	29.8
Northamptonshire	48.6	3.0	0.0	0.0	28.8	45.2	3.0	0.0	0.0	27.0
Northumbria	124.3	9.0	0.0	0.0	126.7	115.0	8.9	0.0	0.0	119.2
Nottinghamshire	86.8	5.5	0.0	0.0	57.0	80.7	5.5	0.0	0.0	53.5
South Wales	100.6	6.7	0.0	81.9	0.0	92.7	6.7	0.0	77.6	0.0
South Yorkshire	110.8	6.6	0.0	0.0	94.5	102.7	6.6	0.0	0.0	88.8
Staffordshire	74.2	4.5	0.0	0.0	48.9	68.6	4.5	0.0	0.0	46.2
Suffolk	45.9	3.1	0.0	0.0	27.3	42.8	3.1	0.0	0.0	25.5
Surrey	70.0	4.4	0.0	0.0	35.3	65.0	4.4	0.0	0.0	33.2
Sussex	109.0	7.2	0.0	0.0	65.9	101.1	7.2	0.0	0.0	62.0
Thames Valley	158.2	9.2	0.0	0.0	89.4	147.0	9.1	0.0	0.0	84.0
Warwickshire	35.2	2.8	0.0	0.0	20.1	32.7	2.8	0.0	0.0	18.9
West Mercia	74.1	5.4	0.0	0.0	52.1	68.6	5.3	0.0	0.0	49.1
West Midlands	272.9	16.0	0.0	0.0	224.9	252.9	15.9	0.0	0.0	211.5
West Yorkshire	192.7	14.3	0.0	0.0	150.9	179.3	14.3	0.0	0.0	141.2
Wiltshire	41.6	2.8	0.0	0.0	25.3	38.7	2.8	0.0	0.0	23.8
Total England and Wales	4,779.1	340.0	13.0	161.0	3,345.0	4,440.1	338.0	12.8	151.0	3,138.0

Table 4: Provisional and Indicative revenue allocations for English and Welsh Police Authorities for 2013-14 and 2014-15

Police Authority	*2013-14 HO[1] £ m*	*2014-15 HO[1] £ m*
Avon & Somerset	120.1	118.3
Bedfordshire	43.4	42.7
Cambridgeshire	53.3	52.4

Table 4: Provisional and Indicative revenue allocations for English and Welsh Police Authorities for 2013-14 and 2014-15

Police Authority	*2013-14 HO[1] £ m*	*2014-15 HO[1] £ m*
Cheshire	68.0	66.5
City of London	32.9	33.0
Cleveland	50.2	49.1

Table 4: Provisional and Indicative revenue allocations for English and Welsh Police Authorities for 2013-14 and 2014-15

Police Authority	2013-14 HO[1] £m	2014-15 HO[1] £m
Cumbria	32.3	31.5
Derbyshire	69.0	67.6
Devon & Cornwall	117.4	115.2
Dorset	44.9	43.9
Durham	46.9	45.9
Dyfed-Powys	31.1	30.5
Essex	116.7	114.9
Gloucestershire	38.4	37.7
Greater London Authority	1,102.3	1,084.1
Greater Manchester	244.1	239.0
Gwent	46.0	44.9
Hampshire	136.1	133.6
Hertfordshire	78.5	77.1
Humberside	73.8	72.4
Kent	116.4	114.2
Lancashire	111.8	109.2
Leicestershire	71.6	70.3
Lincolnshire	42.3	41.5
Merseyside	133.9	130.5
Norfolk	57.2	56.2
North Wales	44.7	43.7
North Yorkshire	46.6	45.7
Northamptonshire	48.2	47.5
Northumbria	121.7	119.0
Nottinghamshire	85.7	84.2
South Wales	106.9	105.0
South Yorkshire	109.0	106.9
Staffordshire	72.6	71.0
Suffolk	45.6	44.9
Surrey	69.1	67.8
Sussex	107.4	105.3
Thames Valley	156.2	153.4
Warwickshire	34.7	34.1
West Mercia	72.6	71.0
West Midlands	268.1	262.6
West Yorkshire	190.9	187.8
Wiltshire	41.1	40.4
Total England and Wales	4,699.7	4,612.3

[1] From 2013-14, the Neighbourhood Policing Fund will be rolled into the Police Main Grant.

Table 5: Provisional capital allocations for England and Wales

Force	Capital Grant 2011-12 £m	2012-13 £m	2013-14 £m	2014-15 £m
Avon & Somerset	1.9	2.7	2.5	2.5
Bedfordshire	0.8	1.1	1.1	1.1
Cambridgeshire	0.9	1.4	1.3	1.3
Cheshire	1.2	1.8	1.6	1.6
City of London	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.9
Cleveland	1.0	1.4	1.3	1.3
Cumbria	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.9
Derbyshire	1.2	1.7	1.6	1.6
Devon and Cornwall	2.0	3.0	2.8	2.8
Dorset	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.0
Durham	0.9	1.4	1.2	1.2
Dyfed-Powys	0.6	0.9	0.8	0.8
Essex	1.7	2.5	2.3	2.3
Gloucestershire	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.9
Greater Manchester	4.3	6.3	5.8	5.8
Gwent	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.1
Hampshire	2.1	3.2	2.9	2.9
Hertfordshire	1.1	1.6	1.5	1.5
Humberside	1.3	1.9	1.7	1.7
Kent	2.0	2.9	2.7	2.7
Lancashire	2.0	3.0	2.7	2.7
Leicestershire	1.3	1.9	1.7	1.7
Lincolnshire	0.7	1.1	1.0	1.0
Merseyside	2.5	3.7	3.4	3.4
Metropolitan	22.5	33.1	30.5	30.5
Norfolk	1.0	1.5	1.3	1.3
North Wales	0.9	1.3	1.2	1.2
North Yorkshire	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.1
Northamptonshire	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.1
Northumbria	2.3	3.4	3.2	3.2
Nottinghamshire	1.4	2.0	1.9	1.9
South Wales	1.8	2.7	2.4	2.4
South Yorkshire	2.0	2.9	2.7	2.7
Staffordshire	1.3	1.9	1.7	1.7
Suffolk	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.1
Surrey	1.1	1.7	1.5	1.5
Sussex	1.7	2.5	2.3	2.3
Thames Valley	2.7	4.0	3.7	3.7
Warwickshire	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.1
West Mercia	1.4	2.0	1.8	1.8
West Midlands	4.6	6.7	6.2	6.2
West Yorkshire	3.3	4.9	4.5	4.5
Wiltshire	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.0
Total	85.0	125.0	115.0	115.0

English Language Students (Entry Clearance)

The Minister for Immigration (Damian Green): Under tier 4 of the points-based system, institutions are currently required to ensure their students have a prior knowledge of English at a minimum of B1 level on the common European framework of reference for languages. Competence in English language is a key indicator of a student's ability and motivation to follow a course of study. In the consultation on the reform of the student immigration system, the Government therefore propose that minimum level for tier 4 is raised further to B2—an upper-intermediate level of competence.

I recognise these current arrangements, as well as those proposed, do not meet the special needs of the English language sector. These lower-level courses can be offered through the student visitor route. Leave under this route is limited to six months. The English language sector has represented to me that in some cases, they wish to offer courses of longer duration.

Therefore I have agreed to put in place a temporary measure that will allow English language students on a longer-duration course to be given leave to enter as student visitors for a period not exceeding 11 months.

To enter under this route for the extended period, English language students will need to obtain entry clearance at a British mission overseas in advance of travel, whether they are a visa national or non-visa national, and furnish evidence of the duration of the course. Other requirements, entitlements and restrictions will remain the same as the current student visitor visa. Students will not be entitled to work, sponsor dependants or switch into other routes including tier 4 of the points-based system. Students will have to satisfy the entry clearance officer that they genuinely intend to study, to leave the UK at the end of their studies and can support themselves during their stay. Full details of the route and how students can qualify will be published in guidance on the UK Border Agency website. Students will be able to apply from 10 January 2011.

This concession is intended to create flexibility to allow legitimate English language colleges to continue to offer opportunities to genuine students. I shall monitor closely the practical impact to ensure that it does not become a loophole, and take a decision on making it permanent in due course. English language students will continue to be able to study under tier 4 of the points-based system, as now, where they meet the requirements.

TRANSPORT

EU Transport Council

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Mrs Theresa Villiers): I attended the second Transport Council of the Belgian presidency in Brussels on 2 December.

The Council discussed air cargo security. Following the recent discovery of explosive devices in air cargo, a high-level group produced a report on strengthening air cargo security, for both Council meetings on 2 December (Transport and Justice and Home Affairs). The presidency presented this report, which sets out ways to strengthen the security regime around air cargo coming into the EU.

The UK broadly welcomed the report and the associated action plan and provided the Council with some details of the recent air cargo incident. The presidency concluded orally that the Council had a "positive appreciation" of the report, and asked the Commission and member states to ensure a speedy implementation of the action plan. The Commission was asked to report back to the Council on progress made. A parallel discussion took place in the JHA Council.

The presidency updated the Council on progress with negotiations on the draft directive on cross-border enforcement in the field of road safety. The proposed directive aims to improve cross-border enforcement of certain road safety offences by facilitating exchange of data between authorities. The UK and Ireland supported a proposal to change the legal base for this proposal to Justice and Home Affairs, and emphasised that this change engaged our right to decide whether or not to opt in to the directive. We reserved our position on the substance, pending formal consideration of our stance and consultation with Parliament during the permitted three-month period. Both countries tabled minute statements to this effect.

All member states were in favour of the change of treaty base. The Commission has however made it clear that it does not support a JHA legal base. The presidency concluded that there was consensus on the text of the draft directive, but did not seek confirmation of a political agreement. They acknowledged the UK's rights under protocol 21 to have the necessary period to consider whether or not to opt in.

The Commission presented its recent proposal to recast the 2001 first rail package, which set the initial framework for a single European rail market. The presidency gave an account of early discussions on the proposal. The discussion in the Council concluded that the publication of national rail infrastructure development strategies was a good approach. The UK broadly supported the proposal, in particular endorsing the need for adequately resourced and properly independent regulatory bodies, in order to facilitate market entry and competition. However, I highlighted the importance of effective enforcement of the existing directive if we are to see real progress on opening up rail markets across Europe to cross-border competition. Discussions will continue under the Hungarian presidency.

The presidency reported on progress in discussions on a proposal for a decision on the public regulated service (PRS) of the Galileo programme. The decision would set out controls over access to the high-accuracy positioning signal from Galileo. The UK noted the lack of an impact assessment and expressed disappointment at the lack of visibility on costs. We expressed concern about handling of security and stressed that common minimum standards needed to be defined by the GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) Security Board. Discussions will continue under the Hungarian presidency.

Following the informal meeting of EU Transport Ministers held in Antwerp in September, the Council adopted conclusions on the integration of waterborne transport into the EU logistics chain. The conclusions are acceptable to the UK.

The Council also adopted conclusions following the Commission's communication entitled "Towards a European road safety area: policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020". The conclusions state that any new EU legislation must be proportionate and supported by robust impact assessments, and the UK was able to support their adoption.

Among AOB items, the Commission gave a presentation of its recent proposal to revise the regulation which established the European Maritime Safety Agency and to bring the agency's tasks into line with more recent legislation. The UK supported a statement by Germany, which expressed concern about any increase in EMSA's budget and staffing.

Local Sustainable Transport Fund

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Norman Baker): I wish to inform the House of the plans to publish next month detailed guidance on the operation of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, for which £560 million has been set aside in the four-year period to 2014-15. Coupled with the funding local authorities will receive through the Integrated Transport and Highways Maintenance Blocks, which I am announcing today, this represents almost £5 billion funding for small local transport schemes over the next four years.

The establishment of the LSTF reflects the importance the Government attach to helping build locally a strong economy and addressing at a local level the urgent challenge of climate change and the commitment made in the coalition agreement to promoting sustainable travel initiatives.

The guidance will invite local transport authorities in England (outside London) to apply for funding to support the cost of a range of sustainable travel measures. Packages might, for example, include measures that promote walking and cycling, encourage modal shift, manage effectively demands on the network, secure better traffic management, improve road safety and improve access and mobility for local communities.

The guidance will also set out the criteria against which decisions on the allocation of funding will be taken. The criteria will include meeting the core objectives of supporting economic growth and reducing carbon. Bids will also need to demonstrate value for money, deliverability and affordability of package proposals.

We have set aside the following LSTF funding over the next four financial years:

£m	*2011-12*	*2012-13*	*2013-14*	*2014-15*	*Total*
Resource	50	100	100	100	350
Capital	30	40	60	80	210
Total	80	140	160	180	560

We wish to support as many local transport authorities as possible through the fund.

This fund will also support Bikeability training in each financial year and the following projects in 2011-12 only in order to maintain momentum on sustainable travel while local authorities prepare their proposals:

£13 million for Links to Schools, Bike Club and walking to school initiatives;

£1 million for Transport Direct cycle journey planner; and

£250,000 to take forward business to business initiatives on alternatives to travel.

Authorities will be able to bid for small packages of under £5 million and larger packages of up to £50 million over the fund period, but will only be able to be successful with one bid.

The application process is being designed to be as simple and straightforward as possible with the flexibility to deal with proposals to the fund of different complexity and scale. Local authorities will also be given a choice as to when to apply to the fund in recognition that they will be at different levels of readiness to submit proposals, with two rounds of bidding; one closing in April, the other at a later date.

I am writing today to local transport authorities in England (outside London) inviting them to start preparing and developing their proposals and to consider what skills and resources they will require. Bids from local transport authorities will be particularly welcome if they can demonstrate support from, and the involvement of, voluntary and community organisations, and the private sector. The ability to lever in financial contributions from external sources will also be taken into account in assessing value for money.

Local Transport Capital Blocks Settlement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Norman Baker): Following the spending review on 20 October 2010, which included the England-wide totals for future transport grants, I have today placed in the Libraries of the House details of the local transport capital settlement for individual local authorities in England.

This includes over £3 billion over the next four years for local highways maintenance. With limited resources available, it is essential that highways maintenance continues to be prioritised, reflecting the economic and social importance to local communities, the need to safeguard the largest single local public asset and the liabilities for future years that can be created from short-term cuts in maintenance.

The Department is also providing over £1.3 billion for small transport improvement schemes, reflecting the contribution these schemes make to improving road safety, stimulating local economies by reducing congestion, and delivering social justice to local communities.

Funding allocations are calculated according to needs-based formulae that are developed with local authorities. The funding is not ring-fenced, and local authorities are free to spend their allocations in accordance with their priorities. All funding will be supplied as capital grant, and not as supported borrowing. The figures provided include final allocations for 2011-12 to 2012-13, and indicative allocations for 2013-14 to 2014-15.

This announcement follows a recent consultation on local transport capital funding. A summary of responses and the Department's proposed next steps are available on the Department's website at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/localtransportfunding

and have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

The Department is separately setting aside £560 million over the four year period to 2014-15 for the local sustainable transport fund. I am announcing today in a separate statement to the House plans for publishing guidance on the operation of this fund.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pension Schemes (Default Investment Options)

The Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Steve Webb): Today we will publish a consultation on default investment options for those people who are automatically enrolled into defined contribution pension schemes.

Automatic enrolment into workplace pensions will see millions of individuals newly saving for their retirements. Many of these people will not choose to make an active investment choice and it is therefore important that suitable default options are available to them.

To this end the Government have developed guidance on the design, governance, communication and review of default options.

This consultation provides the opportunity for the Government to work with interested and knowledgeable parties to ensure that this guidance is balanced and appropriate and that members' interests are protected.

The guidance will be published in spring 2011.

The consultation document is available on the Department's website at: www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations.

Independent Living Fund

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Maria Miller): In June 2010, following the closure of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) to new applicants for the remainder of the 2010-11 financial year, the coalition Government announced that they would work closely with the trustees of the fund to consider settling the future of the fund.

The Government are firmly committed to disability equality and the development of a personalised approach providing full choice and control for disabled people. The 2007 independent review of the ILF recommended reform to ensure long-term sustainability. We believe there is a strong and principled case for reform and for the social care support needs of all disabled people to be delivered equitably as part of local authorities' broader independent living strategies in line with local priorities and local accountability.

The ILF is a discretionary trust and payments from the fund do not take precedence over the responsibility of the local authority to make an assessment of a user's needs. Local authorities already have a statutory responsibility to provide social care support to its residents and as part of this responsibility, local authorities will need to consider the requirements of clients who may otherwise have received an additional ILF package.

Having reviewed the role of the Independent Living Fund, and consulted informally with disability organisations, local government representatives and colleagues in the Department of Health, working with the fund's trustees, we have concluded that the model of the ILF as an independent discretionary trust delivering social care is financially unsustainable. The Independent Living Fund will, therefore, remain closed permanently to new applications and the trustees support this decision.

It remains the priority of the Independent Living Fund and the Government to safeguard the position of the existing recipients of the fund and we will:

> In 2011, following the publication of the report by the Commission on the Funding of Care and Support, carry out a formal consultation. This will inform decisions on determining how best to continue to support existing users of the ILF in to a social care system based on the principles of personalised budgets, the findings of the commission and recognising the importance of the support that ILF users have built their lives around. We will consult fully with disabled people, particularly current users of the Independent Living Fund and their families, local authorities and other interested parties, including the devolved Administrations;
>
> Support the ILF to continue to administer existing awards throughout this Parliament; and
>
> Fully protect the programme budget for existing recipients of the Independent Living Fund within DWP throughout this Parliament.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 14 December 2010

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Telecoms Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (Mr Edward Vaizey): My noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Wilcox) has today made the following statement:

"The Telecommunications Council took place in Brussels on 3 December and was chaired by the Belgian presidency.

I was unable to attend Council due to the travel disruption caused by the unseasonable weather conditions and I was represented at Council by Andy Lebrecht (UK's Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU—UKREP) for the formal agenda items and by Martin Jones (UKREP) for the lunch-time discussion on roaming. An official from BIS also attended.

Lunch-time discussion on mobile roaming

In order to inform and shape the debate, Ministers were asked to consider three questions on this issue and I enclose the full text within annex A to this statement. In summary, they covered issues related to: stimulating competition; the impact of new technologies; and whether a cap on retail data prices was an appropriate course of action.

I understand that the discussion was positive in nature and below is a summary of the main points made during the debate:

> The Commission and most member states see the introduction of greater competition in the EU roaming market as the way to decrease what are regarded as relatively high prices for consumers;
>
> However, price regulation was seen by both the Commission and most member states as the least preferred option;
>
> A recognition that the recently agreed telecommunications framework package would not be re-opened in respect of mobile roaming;
>
> Technology was seen as one way that might allow for a diversity of approaches to tackle this issue and would, therefore, bring down prices over time for consumers; and
>
> It was preferable to adopt a solution that was based on a multi-stakeholder approach.

The UK's contribution to the debate was as detailed in my pre-Council statement and confirmed the UK's views that a solution may not necessarily involve regulation featuring retail price controls and that the UK preferred a solution based on a multi-stakeholder approach. I am pleased to report that these points were noted by Commissioner Kroes during her summing up of the debate.

Following lunch, the formal business of Council took place.

Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the first Radio Spectrum—Policy Programme Radio Spectrum Policy Programme (RSPP): A Progress Report and Exchange of Views. (EM 13872/10).

This discussion item focused on four previously issued questions and is attached within annex A. In summary, these questions covered: the contribution of efficient spectrum management towards Europe 2020 goals; if an inventory of EU spectrum would also contribute towards these goals; a commonly agreed date for release of certain spectrum bands and how to overcome problems associated with this; and the role of the EU in international spectrum negotiations.

The presidency began with a progress report on this item and was followed by Commissioner Kroes giving a short presentation of her views. The main points of which were:

> She noted the importance of spectrum to both citizens and business—the main drivers being its contribution towards improving the EU's global competitiveness and the social and quality life improvements it could bring through applications such as e-health;
>
> Thus, it was no longer sustainable to "do nothing" and that it was important that member states needed to agree the bold proposals within the RSPP;
>
> She also noted that many member states have specific issues with the proposed deadlines for clearing and authorising specific spectrum bands;
>
> However, she indicated that she regarded the clearance of the 800 MHz spectrum—that currently associated with analogue television broadcasting—as a key step in making the Commission's broadband strategy targets a reality (in particular the target associated with 30+Mbps—Ref: EM 13874/10) and she was keen not to see the stated deadline of 1 January 2013 slip;
>
> She proposed that the Commission should have a greater role in international and bilateral negotiations regarding spectrum; and
>
> Briefly covered the proposal to produce an inventory of spectrum currently used in the EU.

She concluded by stating the importance of reaching an early agreement on the RSPP.

Member states' interventions then followed. The main points of UK's intervention were:

> Stressing the overall positive nature of the RSPP and its proposals;
>
> We recognised that many member states, including UK, had issues regarding the deadline associated with the release of spectrum and that UK preferred an extension to the deadline associated with release of 800 MHz from January 2013 to January 2015;
>
> UK also has concerns regarding the proposals covering "block sizes" of spectrum;
>
> UK wished to review the Commission's proposal on a spectrum inventory before commenting further but proposed that any inventory should cover both public and private spectrum holdings; and
>
> That we regarded that matters relating to international spectrum negotiations as mainly a member state competency and that should remain the case.

Other member states' interventions noted that the RSPP proposal was critical in making a positive contribution to the wider Europe 2020 strategy and generally shared UK's concerns and supported our position on both spectrum release deadlines (especially for member states who share borders with non-EU states) and an increased role for the EU in international negotiations. However, a number of member states requested Commission assistance with negotiations with non-EU neighbours.

There was general support for UK's call for local circumstances to be taken into account when considering spectrum release deadlines. Several member states indicated concerns regarding the necessary resource to undertake an inventory.

In her summing-up of the debate, Commissioner Kroes reiterated her preference for a January 2013 release date, but indicated the possibility of derogations for member states who share borders with non-EU states (a proposal that would not apply to nor resolve the UK's issues with the proposed deadline).

Finally, during a final intervention, the presidency expressed concern that the Commission may not fully appreciate the extent of concerns of, and problems for member states associated with the proposed spectrum release deadlines.

Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 460/2004 establishing the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) as regards its duration — A Progress Report

Proposal for a Regulation concerning the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) — A Progress Report

These two items were progress reports from the Commission on the progress regarding these proposals. (Ref: EM 14322/10)

There was little discussion covering this item. However, the Commission stated that the modernisation of ENISA was essential and that the fight against cybercrime was a top priority. The only substantive intervention was from Greece — though supported by Cyprus and Bulgaria — who indicated a view that ENISA should have a permanent mandate, as opposed to the five years proposed. In response, the Commission indicated that the EU needed the flexibility of a time-limited mandate, given the rapidly changing nature of issues related to ENISA's work. The UK did not intervene on this item.

Cross-fertilisation between the Europe 2020 flagship initiatives "A Digital Agenda for Europe" and "Innovation Union" — Adoption of Council Conclusions; and

European Broadband: investing in digitally driven growth — Adoption of Council Conclusions

These two Council conclusions were adopted without comment from any member states.

This item was followed by the "any other business" items, which were:

Report on the state of development of roaming services within the European Union — Presentation by the Commission;

Commissioner Kroes summarised the lunch-time discussion and stated that a dialogue with all stakeholders was necessary (a point made by the UK during lunch);

Internet Governance Forum (IGF) — Briefing by the Commission and the Presidency;

The Commission noted the positive outcome of the recent renewal of the mandate of the IGF by the United Nations and thanked Lithuania for hosting the most recent IGF;

The next Presidency's programme and events — Briefing by the Hungarian delegation;

It was noted that the incoming presidency were planning an informal Ministerial meeting on infrastructure protection and that the next TTE Council would take place on 27 May 2011.

Other than noted above, there were no substantive points made on these three items and Council concluded following them.

ANNEX A — Questions for Discussion at Telecoms Council (Dec 2010)

RSPP/Spectrum

1. Do the Ministers believe that spectrum should contribute to achieve the goals of EU 2020? In particular, should spectrum contribute to economic growth and to secure a competitive advantage in innovative wireless technologies not only in the telecom sector but also in other sectors such as transport, the environment, energy or research and development?

2. In order to contribute fully to the goals of the digital agenda and of EU 2020, should the Commission be asked to produce, in collaboration with the member states, an inventory of the different uses made of the spectrum in Europe? Are their some types of spectrum that should be addressed more carefully in such inventory?

3. With regard to (harmonized) spectrum used for electronic communications services, do the member states wish to agree on early common deadlines for making spectrum available for wireless broadband? How should possible obstacles be addressed?

4. Should the Union play a broader role in order to better defend and promote the EU spectrum policies in international negotiations?

Mobile Roaming

1. What is the best way to stimulate competition in roaming services and achieve a well-functioning single market for the benefit of European consumers?

2. What impact will medium to long-term market developments, e.g. the transition to next generation mobile networks (LTE) and the use of all-IP technologies, have on the roaming market?

3. In the short term, should the roaming regulation be adapted to add a retail price cap for data, similar to what is foreseen for voice and SMS?"

TREASURY

Simple Financial Products (Consultation)

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr Mark Hoban): Today the Government are publishing a consultation on developing a new category of simple financial products. The consultation sets out the Government's proposals in this area, and provides an opportunity for interested parties to respond. Copies of the document are available on the HM Treasury website.

The Government are committed to helping consumers to take responsibility for their finances and are already taking forward the coalition commitment to develop Britain's first free national financial advice service. This consultation proposes a new regime of simple products that will complement current work on advice and education, giving consumers a simple alternative when they reach the market.

These products will ensure that people understand the products they need, help people make better choices and encourage competition in the market. The Government expect that these proposals will be taken forward on a voluntary basis by the industry, in collaboration with consumer representatives, and that once introduced, will have a positive impact on consumer engagement in the market.

Copies of the consultation document have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Tax Information Exchange (Liberia and Aruba)

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): Tax information exchange agreements (TIEAs) were signed with Liberia in London on 1 November 2010 and with Aruba in The Hague on 5 November 2010.

The texts of the TIEAs have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses and made available on HM Revenue and Custom's website. The texts will be scheduled to draft Orders in Council and laid before the House of Commons in due course.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan Troop Levels: Spring 2011 Roulement

The Secretary of State for Defence (Dr Liam Fox): The next roulement of UK forces in Afghanistan is due to take place in April 2011. The UK's current framework brigade in Helmand, 16 Air Assault Brigade, will be replaced by 3 Commando Brigade. The forces deploying include:

3 Commando Brigade Headquarters, Royal Marines

Elements of 30 Commando Information Exploitation Group, Royal Marines

Elements of the Royal Navy forming Headquarters Joint Force Support (Afghanistan) including members of the Maritime Reserve

Headquarters, 104 Logistic Brigade

Elements of 7 Armoured Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron (207)

42 Commando Royal Marines including members of the Maritime Reserve

45 Commando Royal Marines including members of the Maritime Reserve

Commando Logistic Regiment, Royal Marines

Elements of the Royal Navy forming the in-theatre Medical Regiment and Field Hospital

Elements of 845 Naval Air Squadron including members of the Maritime Reserve

Elements of 846 Naval Air Squadron

Elements of 847 Naval Air Squadron

Elements of 857 Naval Air Squadron including members of the Maritime Reserve

Elements of 854 Naval Air Squadron

Elements of the Royal Naval Regulators

Elements of 3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery

Elements of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers and Greys)

Elements of 9th/12th Lancers (Prince of Wales's)

29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery

Elements of 5th Regiment Royal Artillery

Elements of 12th Regiment Royal Artillery

Elements of 16th Regiment Royal Artillery

Elements of 26th Regiment Royal Artillery

Elements of 32nd Regiment Royal Artillery

Elements of 39th Regiment Royal Artillery

Elements of 47th Regiment Royal Artillery

24 Commando Engineer Regiment

Elements of 12 (Air Support) Engineer Group

Elements of 22 Engineer Regiment

Elements of 28 Engineer Regiment

Elements of 32 Engineer Regiment

Elements of 36 Engineer Regiment

Elements of 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic)

Elements of 101 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal)

Elements of 170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group

Elements of 3rd Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment

Elements of 10th Signal Regiment

Elements of 14th Signals Regiment (Electronic Warfare)

Elements of 21st Signal Regiment (Air Support)

Elements of 22nd Signal Regiment

4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, The Highlanders

3rd Battalion The Mercian Regiment

2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles

1st Battalion The Rifles

Elements of 1 Regiment, Army Air Corps

Elements of 3 Regiment, Army Air Corps

Elements of 2 Logistic Support Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 9 Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 17 Port and Maritime Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 23 Pioneer Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 24 Postal Courier and Movement Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 27 Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 29 Postal Courier and Movement Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

2 Close Support Battalion, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Elements of 7 Air Assault Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Elements of 101 Force Support Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Elements of 104 Force Support Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Elements of 5th Regiment Royal Military Police

Elements of 111 Provost Company Royal Military Police

Elements of 114 Provost Company Royal Military Police

Elements of Special Investigations Branch United Kingdom

Elements of 1 Military Working Dogs Regiment

Elements of 1 Military Intelligence Brigade

Elements of the Military Stabilisation Support Group (MSSG)

Elements of 6th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (Volunteers)

Elements of 4th Battalion The Mercian Regiment (Volunteers)

Elements of 6th Battalion The Rifles (Volunteers)

Elements of 88 Postal and Courier Regiment (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 151 Regiment (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 158 Transport Regiment (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 162 Postal Courier and Movement Regiment (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 166 Supply Regiment (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 148 Expeditionary Force Institute Squadron (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 383 Commando Petroleum Troop (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 395 Air Despatch Troop (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 102 Battalion (Volunteers), Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Elements of the Military Provost Staff and Military Provost Staff (Volunteers)

Elements of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force

Number 6 Royal Air Force, Force Protection Wing Headquarters

Elements of HQ Royal Air Force Police Wing

58 Squadron, Royal Air Force Regiment

617 Squadron, Royal Air Force

31 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of 5 (Army Co-Operation) Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of 18 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of 24 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of 27 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of 28 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of 30 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of 78 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of the Tactical Supply Wing, Royal Air Force

Elements of 1 Air Mobility Wing, Royal Air Force

Elements of 1 Air Control Centre, Royal Air Force

Elements of 90 Signals Unit, Royal Air Force

Elements of 2 (Mechanical Transport) Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of 5001 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Elements of 3 Mobile Catering Squadron

Elements of Tactical Medical Wing

Elements of 1 (Expeditionary Logistics) Squadron

Elements of 93 (Expeditionary Armaments) Squadron

Elements of Tactical Imagery Wing

Elements of Joint Ground Based Air Defence

Elements of Defence HUMINT Unit

Elements of the Joint Support Chain Services

Volunteer and ex-regular members of the reserve forces will continue to deploy to Afghanistan as part of this integrated force package, and we expect to issue around 786 call-out notices to fill some 676 posts. On completion of their mobilisation procedures, the reservists will undertake a period of training and, where applicable, integration with their respective receiving units. The majority will serve on operations for around six months. As part of this commitment, we expect up to 19 members of the sponsored reserves to be in theatre at any one time.

The deployment of 3 Commando Brigade and accompanying units will not result in any change to the UK's established and enduring conventional force level of 9,500 personnel.

I shall make a further statement on the units we expect to serve under 3 Commando Brigade's planned replacement formation, 20th Armoured Brigade, nearer the time of their deployment.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Afghanistan: Monthly Progress Report

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr William Hague): I wish to inform the House that today, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, together with the Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development, is publishing the first progress report on developments in Afghanistan, which I announced we would publish every month in my statement to the House on 27 October.

The report focuses on key developments during the month of November.

At the NATO Lisbon summit, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)'s 48 contributing nations reaffirmed their enduring commitment to Afghanistan's security and stability. NATO and Afghanistan also agreed the framework of a long-term partnership that looks beyond the end of ISAF's current mission. The summit set out the timetable for transition of lead responsibility for security from international to Afghan forces by the end of 2014.

Transition to Afghan lead security responsibility will be dependent on the conditions in each district and province. It will see ISAF's role evolve away from combat towards increased training, mentoring and support. In Lisbon, ISAF partners joined the UK in pledging additional trainers to help Afghan security forces build capacity and prepare to assume lead responsibility for security, as set out at the summit.

Pressure on the insurgency is increasing due to ISAF's operations. The significant uplift in troop numbers has corresponded to an increase in military operations, particularly in those areas where insurgent activity is still strong, although this has not caused a significant increase in civilian casualties.

Progress continues to be made in developing the Afghan national army and the Afghan national police, both of which are on track to meet the targets for trained soldiers and police officers, agreed at the London conference in January this year, by November 2011. Investment continues in the training of both the army and the police, particularly their leadership.

The results of September's parliamentary elections were declared. While by no means free of irregularities or fraud, they were broadly credible, given the circumstances. Approximately 60% of Parliamentarians are new to the National Assembly. Female candidates have done well. Both of the two seats in Nimroz province were won by women—the first time any Afghan woman has won a seat not reserved for a female candidate.

The Afghan Government reported progress on the commitments made at the Kabul conference in July on security, anti-corruption, human rights and public financial management.

An important example of the region's commitment to supporting Afghanistan was the fourth regional economic co-operation conference on Afghanistan (RECCA), held in Istanbul, Turkey on 2-3 November. The UK was central to establishing the RECCA process in 2005, and this year funded the establishment of a centre for regional co-operation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kabul.

A long awaited Afghan-Pakistan transit trade agreement was finally signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan on 29 October, enabling cargo trucks to reach Pakistani ports and the border with India. This will provide a significant boost for Afghan trade.

I am placing the report in the Library of the House. It will also be published on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website (www.fco.gov.uk) and the HMG UK and Afghanistan website (http://afghanistan.hmg.gov.uk/).

HEALTH

Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Anne Milton): The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council met on 6 and 7 December in Brussels. The health and consumer affairs part of the Council was taken on 7 December. I represented the UK.

At the meeting, following an exchange of views on the draft regulation on provision of food information to consumers, political agreement between member states was reached by qualified majority. The United Kingdom voted in favour of the proposal. The text will now be forwarded to the European Parliament for their consideration.

A policy debate on a possible mechanism for the joint procurement of vaccines and antiviral medication concluded that a voluntary framework should be developed.

Council conclusions were adopted on: investing in Europe's health work force of tomorrow—scope for innovation and collaboration; innovation and solidarity in pharmaceuticals and on innovative approaches for chronic diseases in public health and health care systems.

The Commission provided an update on progress of the proposals on information to the general public on medicinal products, and the presidency provided information on a number of conferences and international events organised during their presidency.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Forensic Science

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (James Brokenshire): The Forensic Science Service (FSS) was an Executive agency which was granted trading fund status in 1999, a step designed to increase its financial flexibility. Then, following the McFarland review in 2002, FSS Ltd was established as a GovCo, wholly owned by the Government, in December 2005. The intention was that this be a transitional step towards a "public-private partnership".

In the event, however, no further progress was made. This lack of progress has led in our view to opportunities for reform being missed, and continuing reductions in the value of publicly owned assets.

The previous Government did not reform the Forensic Science Service when they had the chance, and instead allowed it to maintain a cost base far higher than its commercial rivals. This meant that FSS continued operating uncompetitive terms and conditions and expanded its employment levels between 1999 and 2003. This was undertaken without bringing down the cost base towards a level where FSS would be able to compete.

Commercial rivals, many established by former FSS members of staff, have taken market share from the former state-run monopoly.

FSS was set up as a GovCo, with an £18 million loan in December 2005. The company has met interest payments on this loan but cannot afford to repay the principal amount borrowed.

The previous Government supported the company with a further £50 million grant from early 2009 to restructure the business.

Despite this intervention and the commitment of the current management team, the current challenging forensics market has put the FSS back into serious financial difficulty. FSS is currently making operating losses of around £2 million per month. Its cash is due to run out as early as January next year. It is vital that we take clear and decisive action to sort this out.

The police have advised us that their spend on external forensic suppliers will continue to fall over the next few years, as forces seek to maximise efficiencies in this area. HMIC concurs with this assessment.

We have therefore decided to support the wind down of FSS, transferring or selling off as much of its operations as possible. We will work with FSS management and staff, ACPO, and other suppliers to ensure an orderly transition, but our firm ambition is that there will be no continuing state interest in a forensics provider by March 2012.

There is no justification for the uncertainty and costs of trying to restructure and retain the business.

We will ensure the orderly wind down of FSS does not impact on police service customers or the wider criminal justice system. With ACPO, we will put in place a central team to ensure work is transferred in a controlled way and that arrangements are put in place to ensure security of supply in future. The continued provision of effective forensics is our priority.

We know that there are real challenges ahead for FSS staff whose skills and contribution will be important as we move through the transition. We will be working hard with the company to ensure that staff are kept fully informed of developments.

We will also be working with ACPO to seek to maximise the level of competition in the market including through opportunities created by FSS leaving the field. This will help to ensure that police forces benefit from cost-effective use of forensics.

We want to see the UK forensic science industry operating as a genuine market, with private sector providers competing to provide innovative services at the lowest cost. This will preserve police resources and maximise the positive impact forensic sciences can have on tackling crime. A competitive market can help to drive down prices and improve turnaround times, meaning serious crimes can be cleared up more quickly and efficiently. Ultimately, that is what everyone in the criminal justice system wants to see.

PRIME MINISTER

Draft Cabinet Manual

The Prime Minister (Mr David Cameron): The Cabinet Secretary, Sir Gus O'Donnell, has published today the draft Cabinet Manual on the Cabinet Office website: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/cabinet-manual.

The draft Cabinet Manual is intended to be a source of information on the UK's laws, conventions and rules that affect the operation and procedures of Government.

Twelve weeks have been allowed for comment (until 8 March 2011).

Copies of the draft Cabinet Manual have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and also in the Vote Office.

TRANSPORT

Crossrail

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Mrs Theresa Villiers): I wish to update the House on Crossrail progress since my annual update on 15 July 2010, *Official Report*, columns 43-44WS, in which I undertook to report later in the year on progress made by Crossrail Ltd on their value-for-money programme.

The spending review announcement confirmed Government's joint commitment with the Mayor of London to delivering Crossrail, and secured the funding to deliver the scheme to its original scope.

As I indicated in July, Crossrail Ltd has been undertaking a programme of value engineering, risk avoidance and mitigation, alongside indirect cost reduction to ensure that the scheme is delivered in the most efficient way possible. In line with this approach, the Government accepted an engineering-led solution to delivering the central section which has enabled substantial savings of around £1 billion to the Crossrail funding package to be identified. While the construction programme for the central section will be lengthened by around a year, this has enabled the Government to confirm that funding is available for the whole project.

We now expect that Crossrail services will commence from 2018. However, the detailed timetable for the phased introduction of Crossrail services requires additional work in a number of areas. For example, further work needs to take place on:

(i) the transfer of services from existing franchises to the future Crossrail operations; and

(ii) the development of detailed plans on the commissioning of services.

It should be noted that Crossrail services were always planned to be phased into operation over some months and it remains a priority for the Government to ensure services are commissioned in the most efficient possible way.

In addition, I wish to inform the House that Crossrail Ltd has issued its notice of intention to award the tunnelling contracts for the central section tunnels. These contracts mark a further milestone in Crossrail's progress towards the start of tunnelling in late 2011.

Crossrail Ltd continues to work to achieve further savings in advance of the final review point for the project in spring next year. I expect to make a further update on progress then.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council

The Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Chris Grayling): The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council was held on 6 December 2010 in Brussels. I represented the United Kingdom.

The main item on the agenda was a policy debate on the pregnant workers directive. Ahead of Council, the UK with the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Netherlands, Slovakia and Sweden circulated a joint minute statement. This underlined the importance of subsidiarity and member state competence in setting social security systems; criticised the EP's First Reading position; questioned the value of further negotiations; and called for a "pause for reflection" involving a Council impact assessment and consultation with social partners. In my intervention, I argued that the negotiations may be at the "end of the road" and while Council should at the very least have a pause for reflection, I see little point in further negotiations given the gulf between the co-legislators. We will continue to argue for these proposals to be abandoned. Despite the opposition of many member states to the proposal, the presidency intends to consult with the incoming Hungarian and Polish presidencies and table a roadmap for further discussions.

The other main agenda item was on pensions. The Council adopted conclusions and in the ensuing debate, the presidency asked the member states what measures they were taking to ensure the provision of adequate pensions, and asked for their initial reactions to the Green Paper on pensions. I outlined the UK's reforms to improve state pensions, to encourage earlier saving for retirement and to extend working lives. In reaction to the Green Paper, I acknowledged the value added through sharing of best practice at a European level but stressed that there could be no "one size fits all" solution. In particular, I argued there was no evidence for why Solvency II capital requirements should be applied to pensions, which, far from being in consumers' interests, could seriously weaken defined benefit schemes.

The Commission presented its EU 2020 flagship "New Skills and Jobs". Council took note of presidency conclusions on the Commission's flagship initiatives "Youth On the Move" and "New Skills and Jobs"; of Employment Committee opinions on employment and environment and the examination of countries' employment policies; and of a joint Employment Committee and Social Policy Committee opinion on a monitoring framework for employment policies. It also adopted Council conclusions on employment policies and the green economy, adapting to an ageing workforce, the social elements of the Europe 2020 strategy, social services of general interest and gender.

Ministers adopted a progress report on the Directive on Equal Treatment—the anti-discrimination directive and a declaration on the European year for combating poverty and social exclusion 2010. They also agreed a general approach on the decision to create a European year for active ageing 2012.

On the "A" points, the UK submitted a minute statement on the Council decision on the EU-Switzerland agreement extending social security rights to non-active persons moving between the EU and Switzerland. This explained our decision not to opt in to the decision, our intention to seek a reciprocal exemption for non-active persons, and our disagreement with the interpretation given by the Council Legal Services to how the duty of sincere co-operation applied in these circumstances.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 15 December 2010

TREASURY

Financial Assistance for Ireland

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr George Osborne): I have today placed in the Libraries of both Houses and made available in the Vote Office copies of a summary of key terms for the credit facility for Ireland, agreed in principle with the Irish authorities, to inform debate of the Loans to Ireland Bill.

The full credit agreement is currently being negotiated between HM Treasury and Ireland and will be provided to the House in due course.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Transposition of EU Regulations

The Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (Vince Cable): I would like to inform the House that today I will set out a series of new principles that the Government will use when introducing European measures into UK law. Copies of the guiding principles will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses. These will end so-called gold-plating so that British businesses are not put at a disadvantage relative to their European competitors.

The key to the new measures will be the principle of copying out the text of European directives directly into UK law. The direct "copy out" principle will mean that British interpretations of European law are not unfairly restricting British companies.

The new measures are part of a wider Government policy to tackle EU regulations, including: by working with business organisations to prioritise proposals in the European Commission's legislative work plan for 2011 and beyond, working closely with other European countries to push for more outcome-focused EU regulation, and improving how evidence is used by the European Parliament and Council.

The main elements of the new Government principles are:

> Work on the implementation of an EU directive should start immediately after agreement is reached in Brussels. By starting implementation work early, businesses will have more chance to influence the approach, ensuring greater certainty and early warning about its impact.
>
> Early transposition of EU regulations will be avoided except where there are compelling reasons for earlier implementation. This will ensure that British businesses are not put at a disadvantage to their European competitors.
>
> European directives will normally be directly copied into UK legislation, except where it would adversely affect UK interests, for example, by putting UK businesses at a competitive disadvantage.
>
> A statutory duty will be placed on Ministers to conduct a review of domestic legislation implementing a European directive every five years. This will allow businesses to influence any necessary improvements based on their own practical experience of applying the rules.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Anti-Semitism Inquiry (Government Response)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Andrew Stunell): I am pleased to announce that I am today laying before Parliament the coalition Government's three-year-on response to the all party parliamentary inquiry into anti-Semitism (Command Paper Cm 7991).

In May 2008 the previous Government published a progress report on the 35 recommendations in the all party parliamentary inquiry into anti-Semitism. Since coming into office the coalition Government undertook to report back to Parliament on further progress in implementing the inquiry's recommendations.

We believe the best way to tackle anti-Semitism is through effective implementation of strong legislation against racial and religious discrimination and racially and religiously motivated crime. This must be underpinned by policies and strategies which support an integrated society where people are able to take part in society to the full; get on well together and are treated fairly.

We have made significant progress against the 35 recommendations made by the all party parliamentary inquiry's constructive and comprehensive report through the cross-Government working group to tackle anti-Semitism which brings together civil servants from across Whitehall and members of the three major Jewish community organisations.

We have ensured that there is now agreement for all police forces to record anti-Semitic hate crimes and the first disaggregated statistics were published in November. Another key success has been the agreement by the Department for Education to fund counter-terrorism security needs of Jewish faith schools within the state sector.

Despite the progress outlined in the report, there is no room for complacency and we will continue to take practical, effective action to stamp out anti-Semitism whenever and wherever it occurs. We are committed to increasing the number of hate crimes brought to justice, tackling anti-Semitism on university campuses, and challenging hate crime and extremism on the internet. We have agreed to continue our support of the cross-Government working group to tackle anti-Semitism and will report back to Parliament on any further progress.

Sustainable Communities Act and Barrier Busting

The Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Greg Clark): I am today announcing ways the Government will further redistribute power from Westminster and Whitehall to people, neighbourhoods, communities and local institutions.

Sustainable Communities Act 2007

The Secretary of State has today issued decisions on whether to implement proposals submitted by local authorities under the Sustainable Communities Act.

The Government are grateful to the Local Government Association for undertaking the role of "selector", and shortlisting 199 proposals in December 2009. The Secretary of State has examined all the requests for assistance contained within the proposals in the light of the spending review and the coalition agreement and, in accordance with the Act, discussed them with the selector.

I am pleased that the Government will take action to implement, or implement in part, 37% of requests. We will also work with councils on 25% of requests to explore the issues more closely, or explain how existing powers can achieve the desired outcome.

The Secretary of State has today invited all local authorities to once again submit proposals under the Sustainable Communities Act. The invitation will be placed on the Department's website. The Government intend to revise the role of the selector in the light of this invitation, and will update the House in the new year.

I have placed copies of the Secretary of State's decisions under the Sustainable Communities Act and his invitation to submit further proposals in the Library of the House.

Barrier busters to remove barriers to local action

I have today launched an online portal to make it easier for councils, community groups, local institutions and individuals to highlight bureaucratic barriers stopping them from taking action they believe would improve their area.

The online portal, available at: http://barrierbusting.communities.gov.uk will also make it easier for councils to submit proposals under the Sustainable Communities Act. Councils will be able to submit directly to the Secretary of State rather than an external selector, and at a time of their choosing—not a centrally imposed deadline.

I have established a specialised team within the Department for Communities and Local Government who will work with those who submit requests for assistance through the portal, and will try to remove the barrier identified.

This online portal will ensure that our commitment to decentralising power is made as transparent as possible. Members of the public will be able to see how we are dealing with requests, and hold us to account accordingly.

DEFENCE

EU Foreign Affairs Council (Defence)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Gerald Howarth): The EU Foreign Affairs Council met in Defence Ministers formation on 9 December 2010 in Brussels. I represented the UK for the morning sessions but had to return to London before lunch when the UK was represented by Mr Tim Barrow, the UK ambassador to the Political and Security Committee.

The agenda items covered were as follows:

Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) in Defence Ministers Formation

The Council adopted conclusions on military capability development. These can be found at the following website:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/118347.pdf.

Copies have been placed in the Library of the House.

Baroness Ashton stressed the need for improved co-operation in developing capabilities in Europe in a time of budget cuts. There was strong support from member states for increased effort in pooling and sharing, and I emphasised that this needed to be driven by voluntary national commitments to pragmatic solutions, using the example of the recent UK/France agreement. I also expressed a preference to revert to the traditional format of Defence Ministers and Foreign Ministers meeting together in the FAC to discuss common foreign security policy and common security and defence policy as a linked set of issues.

I made clear that, in the current economic climate, with most member states including the UK reducing their defence budgets, I could not agree to an increase in the budget of the European Defence Agency (EDA) for 2011. The Council subsequently agreed to freeze the EDA budget for 2011 at the same level as 2010 (€30.5 million).

The Council agreed a 2010 report from the Baroness Ashton, head of the EDA, in addition to the 2011 EDA work guidelines.

EDA Steering Board

An EDA steering board at Defence Ministers level was held in the margins of the Council. Ministers discussed the appointment of the next EDA executive, and agreed a further period of consultation on Baroness Ashton's proposal. The steering board also took note of the agency's ongoing work on pooling and sharing.

Informal Meeting with NATO Secretary General Rasmussen

NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen briefed Ministers on the Lisbon summit and on the importance of improving the EU/NATO relationship, including in the field of capability development. This built on recent closer working in areas of counter-IEDs and medical support. Ministers agreed on the need for closer co-operation between the EU and NATO.

Informal FAC Session on operations

Ministers discussed CSDP military operations over lunch, and were briefed by the three operation commanders. Major General Howes (Op ATALANTA) stressed the need for changing the risk/reward ratio for pirates, and Ministers discussed the need for regional capacity building. Colonel Elul (EU Training Mission Somalia) briefed that training was going well, but that the reintegration of trainees in Mogadishu remained a challenge. General McColl (Operation ALTHEA) informed Ministers that the security environment remained stable in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ministers debated the need for the EU to remain in an executive role, and Ambassador Tim Barrow (UK ambassador to the Political and Security Committee), representing the UK, noted that the UN had recently renewed its mandate for a further 12 months.

Strategic Defence and Security Review - Royal Navy

The Secretary of State for Defence (Dr Liam Fox): The White Paper "Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence Review" (Cm 7948), presented to the House on 19 October 2010, explained the Government's intention to make certain changes to the armed forces in order to deliver the force structure we require for the future and to help address the legacy of unaffordability in the defence budget. I am now able to explain more fully those changes that affect the Royal Navy's surface fleet.

We announced that the aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal would be decommissioned and accordingly, she will finally be withdrawn from service at the end of this month. We also announced that we would decommission either her sister ship HMS Illustrious or the landing platform helicopter HMS Ocean following a short study into which of these two ships was better able to provide the capability we require over the next few years. This work has now been completed and we have decided that HMS Ocean should be retained to provide our landing platform helicopter capability for the longer-term. HMS Illustrious will be withdrawn from service in 2014, once HMS Ocean has emerged from a planned refit and been returned to a fully operational state. This will ensure that we retain the ability to deliver an amphibious intervention force from the sea and maintain an experienced crew to support the later introduction into service of the new Queen Elizabeth class carrier.

The White Paper also explained that four frigates would be withdrawn from service in 2011. These are the remaining Type 22 frigates HMS Chatham, Campbeltown, Cumberland and Cornwall. Chatham will be withdrawn from service at the end of January 2011 and Campbeltown and Cumberland will follow on 1 April. HMS Cornwall will be withdrawn at the end of April once she has returned from her current operational deployment to the Indian Ocean.

Other changes affect the Navy's amphibious ships. The Bay class amphibious support ship to be decommissioned will be RFA Largs Bay. She will be withdrawn from service in April 2011. One of our two landing platforms dock will in future be placed at extended readiness while the other is held at high readiness for operations. From November 2011 the high readiness ship will be HMS Bulwark, and on current plans this will change to HMS Albion in late 2016 when Bulwark enters a refit period.

The final changes affect the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. The White Paper said that there would be a fleet of resupply and refuelling vessels scaled to meet the Royal Navy's requirements. With a smaller surface fleet these requirements are correspondingly lower, and hence we have decided to withdraw from service from April 2011 the auxiliary oiler RFA Bayleaf and the auxiliary oiler replenishment RFA Fort George.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Fuel Poverty

The Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (Chris Huhne): Today I am announcing that the budget for the Warm Front scheme in England is fully allocated for this financial year. The budget was set in the 2007 spending review and subsequently updated in last year's pre-Budget report. From today the scheme is fully subscribed and will be unable to take new applications for the remainder of the current year. The scheme has a substantial order book of work that will take to at least March 2011 to complete. I am also announcing the publication of a consultation on the eligibility for Warm Front measures.

Refusal of new applications under the Warm Front Scheme for England

The Warm Front scheme provides a range of energy efficiency and heating measures to vulnerable private sector households in England who are in receipt of a qualifying benefit. Due to high demand for the Warm Front scheme throughout the year the available budget for 2010-11 has now been fully allocated and it is unable to take new applications.

All existing qualifying applications already taken by the scheme manager will be fully honoured and the 76,000 heating and insulation jobs awaiting installation will be completed as far as possible by the end of March 2011. This is only a temporary measure. The scheme will be able to approve new applications in the next financial year.

Warm Front Consultation

Warm Front is one of our key tools for tackling fuel poverty among private sector households in England. The scheme was introduced in 2000 and has helped more than 2 million households vulnerable to fuel poverty with a range of heating, insulation and other energy efficiency measures.

As part of the spending review 2010, the Government announced that we will continue to fund the Warm Front programme for the next two years. With a smaller programme budget it means that it is an appropriate time to consider whether the scope for Warm Front assistance should be revised to better focus support on those in fuel poverty or vulnerable to fuel poverty.

This is the purpose of plans set out today in our consultation. The aim is to improve the cost-effectiveness of the scheme by ensuring that Warm Front will be a better targeted programme to help the most vulnerable receive support in the form of free or subsidised heating and insulation measures.

The Warm Front consultation will run until 9 February 2011 and can be found at: http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/consultations/warm front/warm front.aspx.

The consultation document will also be made available in the Libraries of both Houses.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Environment Council

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mrs Caroline Spelman): I will represent the UK at the Environment Council in Brussels on 20 December.

At this Council, the Belgian presidency will seek political agreement on the regulation concerning the placing on the market of biocidal products. The presidency will also present a progress report on the recast of the directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment and a progress report on the proposal for a regulation regarding the possibility for member states to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory.

The presidency will further seek the adoption of Council conclusions on sustainable materials management and sustainable production and consumption, improving environmental policy instruments and the outcome of and follow-up to the 10th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the convention on biological diversity in Nagoya.

There will also be an exchange of views on the outcome of and follow-up to the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN convention on climate change and the 6th session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto protocol.

There may be an agenda item on the regulation setting emission performance standards for new light commercial vehicles, as part of the Community's integrated approach to reduce CO_2 emissions from light-duty vehicles.

The following topics will be covered under "any other business":

Information from the Commission on the Commission communications on practical implementation of the EU biofuels and bioliquids sustainability scheme and counting rules for biofuels, and on voluntary schemes and default values in the EU biofuels and bioliquids sustainability scheme;

Information from the presidency on the main environmental events organised by the Belgian presidency;

Information from the Lithuanian delegation on nuclear installations planned in the EU neighbourhood (Kaliningrad region and Belarus);

Information from the Belgian delegation on the implementation of directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe with particular regard to PM 10 particles;

Information from the Greek delegation on the outcome of the Mediterranean climate change initiative;

Information from the Portuguese delegation on directive 2008/98/EC on waste, including climate aspects in the application of the energy efficiency formula to waste energy plants and to plants in the EU outermost regions, and the strategic importance of end-of-waste status for high-quality refuse-derived fuel in the near future;

Information from the Romanian delegation on the 2nd Meeting of the Parties to the protocol on water and health to the convention on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes (Bucharest, 23-25 November 2010); and

Information from the Hungarian delegation on the work programme of the incoming presidency.

HEALTH

NHS Consultation, Operating Frameworks and PCT Revenue

The Secretary of State for Health (Mr Andrew Lansley): Today I am laying before Parliament "Liberating the NHS: Legislative framework and next steps" (Cm 7993), the Government's response to the consultation on implementing the White Paper reforms set out in "Equity and excellence: Liberating the NHS". Sir David Nicholson, the NHS chief executive, is also today publishing the NHS operating framework and revenue allocations to primary care trusts (PCTs) for 2011-12. The operating framework and revenue allocations have been placed in the Library. Copies of all documents are available to hon. Members from the Vote Office and to noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office.

"Liberating the NHS: Legislative framework and next steps" shows how the Department has developed its plans in the light of consultation and sets out further detail on the reforms and a timetable for implementation. The document also sets out a timetable for implementation and explains how the consultation has shaped the health and social care Bill, planned for introduction in January. Overall, the document reaffirms the Government's commitment to reforming the NHS so that it:

puts patients right at the heart of decisions made about their care;

puts clinicians in the driving seat on decisions about services; and

is focused on delivering health outcomes that are comparable with, or even better than, those of our international neighbours.

The Department received over 6,000 consultation responses from patients and members of the public, clinicians, voluntary organisations, patient representative groups, local authorities, local involvement networks (LINks), NHS organisations and staff, independent providers, pharmacists, academics, professional bodies and royal colleges, think-tanks and trade unions.

Responses contained a broad mix of support, suggestions for improvement and critical challenge. The insights and suggestions we have heard in consultation have not only strengthened our belief that the reforms are necessary but have also helped us refine our proposals in several areas. In particular, the Government have decided to:

significantly strengthen the role of health and well-being boards in local authorities, and enhance joint working arrangements through a new responsibility to develop a "joint health and well-being strategy" spanning the NHS, social care, public health and potentially other local services. Local authority and NHS commissioners will be required to have regard to this;

create a more distinct identity for Health Watch England, led by a statutory committee within the Care Quality Commission;

increase transparency in commissioning by requiring all GP consortia to have a published constitution;

change our proposal that maternity services should be commissioned by the NHS Commissioning Board;

extend councils' formal scrutiny powers to cover all NHS-funded services, and give local authorities greater freedom in how these are exercised;

phase the timetable for giving local authorities responsibility for commissioning NHS complaints advocacy services, and allow flexibility to commission from other organisations as well as from local Health Watch;

give GP consortia a stronger role in supporting the NHS Commissioning Board to drive up quality in primary care; and create an explicit duty for all arm's length bodies to co-operate in carrying out their functions, backed by a new mechanism for resolving disputes.

Equally important, the feedback we received through consultation has also helped us refine our approach to implementation, in order to create flexibility, empower local leadership, and support the significant cultural change and staff engagement that respondents highlighted would be needed to make our reforms a success. The Department has therefore decided to:

allow a longer and more phased transition period for completing our reforms to providers;

create a clearer, more phased approach to the introduction of GP commissioning, by setting up a programme of GP consortia pathfinders; and

accelerate the introduction of health and well-being boards through a new programme of early implementers.

To take forward these changes the Department has put in place a single, integrated programme for the whole of the transition across the health and care system. This will help sustain performance under the existing regime at the same time as building the leadership to implement the changes. Transition will occur through a carefully designed and managed process, phased over the next four years, to allow for rapid adoption, system-wide learning, and effective risk-management. It will be aided by the creation of a number of specific time-limited transitional vehicles, with a focus on sustaining capability and capacity.

Alongside "Liberating the NHS: Legislative framework and next steps", the NHS chief executive, David Nicholson, has today published the NHS operating framework for 2011-12, which sets out the priorities for the next year. This includes how the NHS will go through a strong and stable transition over the next year to begin to deliver the vision of the White Paper. By the end of 2011-12 we expect NHS organisations to have made significant progress in moving towards a more liberated NHS. Organisations should be working across traditional boundaries to improve the quality of patient care while maintaining the quality and safety of NHS services.

I have also written today to every hon. Member in England detailing their PCT's allocations for 2011-12, which PCTs will use to deliver our vision for reform and our national priorities as set out in the operating framework.

Total revenue investment in the NHS in 2011-12 will grow to over £102 billion. The allocations I am announcing today will provide PCTs with £89 billion to spend on the local front-line services that matter most, an increase of £2.6 billion, or 3%. This funding includes an increase of £1.9 billion in PCT recurrent allocations (including £150 million for re-ablement), £69 million in primary dental services, pharmaceutical services and general ophthalmic services non-recurrent allocations, and £648 million to support joint working between health and social care.

The recurrent allocations are based upon a revised weighted capitation formula that includes improvements, such as a new mental health formula. This lays the groundwork for the switch to allocations to GP consortia and local authorities from the NHS Commissioning Board and Public Health England respectively for 2013-14. These organisational changes will free the NHS from political interference, support the transfer of decision making and responsibility for local health services to the front line, and ensure that public health programmes are safeguarded.

PCTs and local authorities will use the funding for re-ablement and joint working to agree a work plan based on local joint strategic needs assessments to deliver services which may include current services, in particular telecare, re-ablement packages and home adaptations.

The allocations announced today place PCTs in a strong position to deliver the coalition Government's vision for reform, as originally set out in "Liberating the NHS" and today reaffirmed in "Liberating the NHS: Legislative framework and next steps", and our national priorities, today set out in the NHS operating framework.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Pakistan Floods

The Secretary of State for International Development (Mr Andrew Mitchell): I would like to update the House on the Pakistan floods and the UK Government's response to the ongoing emergency relief and early recovery needs of the critically affected population.

Four months after the onset of the floods, the situation remains deeply challenging. The majority of the 14 million people who were displaced by the floods have returned to their areas of origin, apart from in Sindh province. But with homes, farms and villages badly damaged, they will need humanitarian relief for months to come and help to restore livelihoods and basic services, particularly education and health, in the affected areas.

The situation in Sindh remains critical. Up to 350,000 families remain displaced by protracted flooding on the right bank of the Indus in northern Sindh. These people are hard to reach and will need humanitarian relief well into next year—especially shelter, with winter setting in across Pakistan.

In this context, I am pleased to inform the House of further UK Government support for relief and recovery efforts since I last updated the House on 12 October. These include:

Providing safe drinking water, sanitation services, basic health care, basic household items and shelter to some 305,000 people in Sindh and Punjab through Handicap International, Oxfam, and CARE for a total cost of £5.5 million.

Providing emergency shelter for 180,000 people in the worst affected areas of Sindh, through a £1.7 million grant to Concern.

Assisting 25,000 people in Sindh to build permanent homes to replace those destroyed in the floods, through a £1.8 million grant to UNHABITAT

Supporting a disease early-warning system and provision of essential health services to over 500,000 people in the areas worst affected by the floods for the next six months, through a contribution of £2 million to the World Health Organisation's most recent appeal

Helping 200,000 children to resume education, through programmes costing £10 million involving Save the Children, Plan International and Hands. This will involve rehabilitation of damaged schools and provision of temporary facilities where schools have been destroyed while longer-term reconstruction is implemented

Supporting agricultural livelihoods and the wider rural economy that will benefit approximately 1 million people. The programme will provide work opportunities, cash grants, materials, tools, seeds, skills training and technical expertise over the next nine months, through the Consortium of British Humanitarian Agencies at a total cost of £20 million.

Helping over 28,000 families to acquire and look after domestic animals such as poultry, goats, and donkeys to improve nutrition and support their incomes.

All of these interventions have been appraised in detail by my Department to ensure value for money and a focus on results.

The overall DFID humanitarian programme for the flood-affected areas is proceeding well. I can report that, as of 1 December, UKAid has achieved the following; approximately:

- 971,390 people have been provided with drinking water
- 254,480 people have had access to latrines and/or washing areas
- 867,900 people have received hygiene kits or hygiene education
- 453,860 people have had access to basic health care
- 712,590 women and children have received supplementary or therapeutic feeding for malnutrition
- 540,560 people have received emergency goods packages typically including blankets, cooking equipment, jerry cans, and plastic sheeting.
- 504,450 people have received emergency shelter; and
- 71,925 people have benefited from seeds and fertilisers

These results are provisional estimates from ongoing operations where the eventual total number of beneficiaries will be significantly higher.

As a result of UK and other interventions, the risk of disease has been contained so far. But there is no room for complacency. Millions of people will remain highly vulnerable and dependent on external assistance until homes, basic services, economic infrastructure and livelihoods are re-established. My Department plans to maintain a dedicated flood response team on the ground in Pakistan for the next six to nine months, actively monitoring the situation and our programme of humanitarian relief and recovery.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Parliamentary Written Question (Correction)

The Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Chris Grayling): I regret to inform the House that there was an inaccuracy in my written answer 25480 given on 30 Nov 2010, *Official Report*, column 786-88W. The response indicated that the monthly cost of press cuttings to the pensions regulator, a non-departmental public body of the Department for Work and Pensions, was nil. I can confirm that in fact the cost of press cuttings services to the pensions regulator, in each of the last 12 months is as follows:

Month	*Cost (£)*
November 2009	4,646.03
December 2009	5,420.51
January 2010	4,069.37
February 2010	6,729.64
March 2010	5,712.83
April 2010	4,523.39
May 2010	3,605.27
June 2010	4,129.85
July 2010	5,235.71
August 2010	3,112.60
September 2010	1,997.09
October 2010	2,626.66

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 16 December 2010

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Council for Science and Technology

The Minister for Universities and Science (Mr David Willetts): The Prime Minister has agreed to re-constitute the Council for Science and Technology (CST) and reappointed four of the existing members to the newly reconstituted Council, starting from 1 January 2011. The CST is the Government's top-level advisory body on science, engineering and technology policy.

The four reappointees are:

Dr Hermann Hauser Hon CBE, FREng
Professor Alan Hughes
Professor Michael Sterling FREng
Sir Mark Walport FMedSci

Their reappointment term will commence on 1 January 2011 and end on 31 December 2013.

The Prime Minister also reappointed Professor Dame Janet Finch as CST independent co-chair until the end of December 2011, alongside the Government's chief scientific adviser, currently Professor Sir John Beddington CMG FRS.

In addition the Prime Minister has appointed four ex officio members:

President of the Royal Society—Sir Paul Nurse
President of the Royal Academy of Engineering—Lord Browne
President of the Academy of Medical Sciences—Sir John Bell
President of the British Academy—Sir Adam Roberts

as new members of the Council, effective from 1 January 2011.

The recruitment process for around 10 new members is currently under way, in accordance with the OCPA rules.

The CST is the UK Government's top-level advisory body on science and technology policy issues. It reports directly to the Prime Minister. CST's remit is to advise the Prime Minister on strategic science and technology policy issues that cut across the responsibilities of individual Government Departments.

Full details of CST's terms of reference and organisation can be found at http://www.bis.gov.uk/cst.

EU Competitiveness Council (Post-Council Statement)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (Mr Edward Davey): My noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Wilcox) has today made the following statement:

"I represented the UK at the EU Competitiveness Council in Brussels on 10 December 2010, which discussed EU internal market and industry items. Andy Lebrecht, the UK's Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU represented the UK when I was not in attendance.

One of the main items debated was the Commission proposal for a Council regulation on translation arrangements for an EU patent. Member states were unable to achieve resolution by unanimous agreement and a number of member states made a request to the presidency to take on a process of enhanced co-operation in order to make progress. (Enhanced co-operation can be used as a last resort when unanimous agreement cannot be reached and requires the involvement of a minimum of eight member states, while remaining open to any member state that wishes to participate). The UK was among those who supported this request and endorsed the importance of creating a business-friendly EU patent in order to boost competitiveness. The UK, with a number of other member states, supports the Commission's three language proposal (English, French and German).

Council conclusions were adopted on a proposal for an EU gambling framework to harmonise regulation in Europe. Council conclusions relating to the Commission's Single Market Act communication were also agreed after some deliberation. Conclusions on the EU industrial policy flagship initiative were also adopted. All these items were supported by the UK.

On the Commission proposal for a fully harmonised consumer rights directive, the majority of member states have reached agreement on a text. The UK is willing to be flexible in order to reach agreement on a Council position, and expects to endorse the general approach when the text is formally approved at the Environment Council on 20 December.

There were also Any Other Business items comprising an update on the latest EU consumer scoreboard, a Commission report on implementation of the services directive and the mutual evaluation process, a presidency report of a conference on the transposition of EU directives and a presentation by Hungary on their work programme for the forthcoming EU presidency. In the margins of the Council, member states confirmed Prague as the location for the European Agency for the Galileo satellite navigation system."

TREASURY

European Union Finances White Paper

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr Mark Hoban): I am today laying before Parliament the annual European Union finances White Paper "Statement on the 2010 EU Budget and measures to combat fraud and financial mismanagement" (Cm 7978). It is the 30th in the series.

The White Paper gives details of revenue and expenditure in the 2010 EU budget and covers recent developments in EU financial management and measures to counter fraud against the EU budget. It also includes updated details on the budget review, own resources decision, the UK consolidated statement on the use of EU funds in the UK and the European economic recovery plan and changes related to the entry into force of the Lisbon treaty.

Looking forward to future years' budgets, and particularly in the current economic and financial climate, the Government remain determined to ensure better value for money in EU budget spending, to oppose unacceptable budget increases, and to push for improvements in EU financial management.

Carbon Price Support Consultation

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Justine Greening): The Government have today published a consultation to encourage investment in low-carbon electricity generation.

"Carbon price floor: support and certainty for low-carbon investment" is an innovative approach to achieving the UK's energy and climate policy objectives. Giving greater support and certainty to the price of carbon in the power sector will encourage further investment in low-carbon electricity generation. This can be achieved through reform of the climate change levy (CCL) and fuel duty to enable fossil fuels used by power generators to be taxed on the basis of their carbon content.

The proposal is part of a wider package of reforms to the electricity market, covering a number of commitments set out in the coalition agreement. These wider reforms are set out in a consultation on electricity market reform, also published today by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change.

The consultation invites interested parties to submit their views on a range of implementation issues by 11 February. The Government will then publish their response, by Budget 2011. The Government intend to introduce legislation for the proposals in the 2011 Finance Bill (and subsequent secondary legislation) and to bring the proposals into effect from 1 April 2013.

Copies of the document have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses and are available in the Vote Office and on the Treasury website at

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk.

EU Agencies (National Experts)

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): Legislation will be introduced in the Finance Bill 2011 to create an exemption from income tax for subsistence payments made to national experts seconded to EU agencies located in the UK. Separate secondary legislation will be introduced to create a corresponding disregard for the purpose of national insurance contributions. The exemption will remove a disincentive for high-quality experts to be seconded to these agencies and will put the tax treatment of such payments into line with that given to experts seconded to EU agencies in many other EU member states.

The legislation will affect national experts seconded to the European Banking Authority, the European Medicines Agency and the European Police College. It will have effect from 1 January 2011.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Fire and Rescue Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Robert Neill): I have today published the outcomes of the first phase of a process which has the power to determine the future shape and direction of England's fire and rescue service and the wider fire sector. This work, known as "Fire Futures", has been led by the sector and was launched in July by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The scope of the review was determined by the sector and structured around four sector led work streams: localism and accountability; efficiency, effectiveness and productivity; role of the fire and rescue service; and national interests. It reported to me yesterday and I have placed copies of the reports in the Library of the House.

At a time of tough spending choices, it has never been so important to be open to change, to new ideas and ways of working, so that we can prioritise resources to support our front-line services.

Now we will consider options emerging from this work to take forward, based on principles of localism, decentralisation, transparency and value for taxpayers' money. Fire and rescue services are already trusted local partners with a vital community role and are therefore best placed to lead this change.

I am grateful to individuals and organisations from the sector for showing such commitment to this process and taking part in a constructive dialogue which I am confident will now continue as I seek reactions to the reports while I decide which options to take forward. The Government will report back by March 2011.

Building Regulations

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Andrew Stunell): I am setting out today the main elements of the programme of work the Department for Communities and Local Government will lead in the new year to establish the changes required to the building regulations. The work will identify the changes that need to be made to the building regulations regime between now and 2013 to ensure it remains fit for purpose and delivers its contribution to the Government's policy goals.

At the end of July I asked our external partners to tell me their ideas about what in the building regulations needed to be improved or extended, where we might reduce the regulatory burdens and how we might deliver even better levels of compliance. I wanted this to play a key part in helping to deliver our commitment to reduce the burden of regulation while ensuring we had given proper consideration to emerging issues. I am grateful for the way industry and members of the public have responded both in writing and through their participation in workshops.

The programme I am setting out today has been arrived at after active engagement with our external partners. A key theme to emerge from this process has been that these partners believe that although the regime is generally fit for purpose, there are things we can improve. This confirms the Department's belief that the building regulations should remain the national minimum standard that building work should comply with.

While much of the programme of work is deregulatory in nature, it will, however, include work to deliver our commitment to increase energy efficiency through part L (conservation of fuel and power). This will represent our next steps towards zero-carbon buildings and will also provide an opportunity to consider provisions for the existing stock in the light of the Government's emerging policies on reducing carbon emissions, including the green deal. We will also explore how better to ensure high levels of compliance.

In addition, I would like to consider further the case for Government intervention in two other areas. First, whether there is a role to ensure suitable toilet and changing provisions for people with multiple and profound disabilities—often referred to as "Changing Places". I would also like to explore further the case in relation to minimum standards for security in homes and explore whether national regulation might be a more effective approach than voluntary and local interventions.

Set against this there are a number of key areas where we want to explore the potential for deregulation and streamlining of the existing provisions. In particular, representations made to Government demonstrate concern with the costs imposed on electricians by part P (electrical safety—dwellings). We believe it is now time to evaluate the building regulations' contribution to the safety outcomes they were intended to support and, if we are to retain regulation of this kind, how we might minimise the associated costs.

We also believe that there is scope to look at the rationalisation of parts M, K and N (access, protection from falling, collision and impact and glazing respectively) to address areas of potential conflict and overlap between them. As part of this we intend to review existing guidance that promotes the use of access statements in order to consider whether they remain necessary while maintaining the standards of accessibility we are seeking to achieve.

As part of this deregulatory element we also need to explore what changes may be needed to the building control system. I believe there is scope to enhance compliance and reduce the burdens on those who use the system. To that end, over the next few months we will be taking forward work to gather further evidence about actual levels of compliance and reasons for non-compliance. In the light of this, we will be exploring options to further improve enforcement and incentives for responsible businesses. We will also be considering how we can improve the interface with planning and other standards regimes.

In developing this programme we have been mindful, and will remain so, of the need to manage down the regulatory costs to business as part of this process. We will also be specifically considering the impacts on house builders, with the aim of contributing to the achievement of our spending review commitment to reduce regulatory costs over this Parliament.

The Department for Communities and Local Government is also today publishing on its website a supporting document to this statement that provides further information about the exercise we have undertaken and more detail on the programme of work to be taken forward. I am placing copies of this document in the Libraries of both Houses.

DEFENCE

Call-Out Order (Iraq/Afghanistan)

The Minister for the Armed Forces (Nick Harvey): With the expiry of the call-out order made on 5 January 2010, a new order has been made under section 56(1)(a) of the Reserve Forces Act 1996 to enable reservists to continue to be called out into service in support of operations in the region of Iraq and the Gulf

The new order is effective until 4 January 2012, small numbers of reservists continue to be required to support operations in the region and some 44 are currently called out and serving, of whom 20 are in the region.

Continuity of Education Allowance

The Minister for the Armed Forces (Nick Harvey): As announced following the strategic defence and security review, the Ministry of Defence is reviewing the broad range of allowances paid to service personnel. Work is ongoing to define fully the package of changes, but we are now able to announce some changes to the continuity of education allowance (CEA).

The Government place a very high priority on the welfare of service personnel and their families. Due to the requirements of service, some personnel relocate frequently, and it is important to ensure that their children are not disadvantaged by this requirement and have continuity of education. This continuity is not achievable through the day school sector for service personnel whose children accompany them on necessary relocations both at home and overseas. The importance of the allowance in supporting accompanied service and in enabling the armed forces to deploy to meet service needs is well understood. Nevertheless, it represents a significant investment, around £180 million per annum, to support some 5,500 personnel, fewer than 3% of the total number of service personnel. In the current fiscal climate, we must be sure that this expenditure is fully justified. I am therefore leading a review of CEA.

The review will consider the fundamental rationale for the allowance, look at alternatives, including a lesser reliance on independent schools, and at the justification for the current set of entitlements. Longer-term work on the development of a new employment model for service personnel is also likely to impact on the requirement for this allowance, and the review will consider what this might imply. The review will involve consultation with the service community, families federations and those outside who have an interest. I want to keep the period of uncertainty about the future of CEA to a minimum and intend to announce the conclusions of the review in the spring. Any changes will be promulgated well before they are implemented.

In parallel with this review we have put in place some immediate changes to the detailed rules on eligibility and payment structures for CEA and the governance of claims for the allowance. These changes should reduce our expenditure on the allowance by over £20 million per annum. The changes reflect the fundamental justification for the allowance—a commitment on the part of the individual to accompanied service. The most significant of these changes therefore involves withdrawing eligibility for CEA from personnel who serve unaccompanied by their families in some locations (principally but not exclusively MOD London) and in sea-going assignments. Appropriate transitional arrangements have been put in place to ensure individuals who are currently drawing CEA under these 'involuntary separation' rules will not be unfairly disadvantaged.

Armed Forces Pensions

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Andrew Robathan): I am pleased to announce that I will be amending the compensation and pension payments for individuals who die as a result of service while holding acting rank. Pension arrangements under armed forces pension scheme 05 already ensure that any acting rank held at the time of death is taken into account in the pension received by surviving dependants. However, under the armed forces pension scheme 75, in most cases, the acting rank needs to be held for at least a year for it to be recognised in the pension received by surviving dependants. This rule will now be amended to ensure that, in future, those who die as a result of service while holding acting rank will have this higher rank recognised in the pension paid to their dependants, regardless of the length of time the acting rank has been held.

For previous such cases since April 2005, a lump sum payment of £20,000 will be made through the armed forces compensation scheme to ensure the acting rank is recognised in the payments dependants have received.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council (13-14 December)

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mrs Caroline Spelman): My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the hon. Member for Newbury (Richard Benyon) represented the United Kingdom at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in Brussels on 13 and 14 December. Richard Lochhead and Michelle Gildernew attended for Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively.

There were two substantive agenda items on fisheries; the setting of fishing opportunities for EU vessels in the Atlantic, and in the Black Sea respectively. There were four items on agriculture (the three dairy items being taken together) and one agriculture AOB.

On fishing opportunities for 2011, the Council and Commission reached unanimous agreement on a package of measures which set quotas for the main commercial fish stocks in the Atlantic, including for cod, haddock, plaice and sole. Over two days of intensive negotiations, the UK battled hard to reach an agreement that ensures the long term sustainability of fish stocks, while providing short term catching opportunities for our fishing industry. The package my hon. Friend secured, helps all sectors of the industry, large and small, and delivers benefits for all parts of the UK—north, south, east and west. It also means the UK can drive forward with its innovative approach to fisheries management—catch quotas—which enable fishermen to land more while catching less, thereby helping to tackle the scourge of discards. The final agreement included a number of notable gains for the UK, including on Irish Sea Nephrops, Western Channel sole, West of Scotland megrim and monkfish in the West of Scotland and the Celtic Sea.

The UK team also fought off effort restrictions for fisheries in the Celtic Sea, with a commitment to consider a more sensible management regime to apply from 2012. Moreover, they won a firm commitment from the Commission to a comprehensive review of the EU's cod recovery plan next year. The UK also resisted a revision to the management arrangements for plaice in the English Channel, that would have meant UK fishermen losing out badly.

Separately, the Council and Commission also agreed quota levels for sprat and turbot in the Black Sea.

The discussion on CAP reform concentrated on the achievement of food security. While all believed competitiveness to be significant, only Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK supported a greater focus on training, innovation, sustainability and improved business practices as a means of boosting competiveness. The majority of member states cited price volatility as a justification for the continuation of direct payments and wanted to retain a less favoured area scheme in the second pillar of the CAP. Proposals would issue in the next few months.

The Commission presented the dairy proposal and the quarterly market and quota phase-out reports. Both reports showed a positive market situation for the dairy sector. Most member states were on track for the expiry of the quota regime in 2015. The majority of member states welcomed new proposals to increase the power of producers in the food chain. The incoming Hungarian presidency hopes to reach political agreement on the dairy proposal by June.

The Commission presented its legislative proposals on Agricultural Quality Policy plus guidelines: on the use of private quality assurance schemes and on the use of GIs in processed products.

Agriculture and Fisheries Council (29-30 November)

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mrs Caroline Spelman): My hon. Friends the Minister of State and the Under-Secretary, my hon. Friend the Member for Newbury (Richard Benyon), represented the United Kingdom at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in Luxembourg on 29 and 30 November. Elin Jones and Michelle Gildernew also attended for Wales and Northern Ireland respectively.

There were two agenda items on fisheries plus a working lunch on the reform of the common fisheries policy. There were four agenda items on agriculture with seven, mostly agriculture, AOB items.

On deep sea fishing opportunities in 2011-12, the Council and Commission reached agreement on fishing limits, notably deep water sharks, the black scabbardfish, roundnose grenadier, Alfonsinos and forkbeards. Given that these are vulnerable long-life cycle species, of which little is known, the UK and Sweden led calls for a precautionary approach that differentiated these from other fisheries. Some other member states (MSs) pressed for and gained significant concessions. The final agreement included declarations on defining a differentiated category for deep sea species to identify specific treatment in the Commission's policy framework.

On the first round of discussions with Norway on the shared fishing opportunities for 2011 the UK underlined the importance of moving towards a catch quota management system which would reduce discards and incentivise responsible fishing and emphasised the importance of maximising arctic cod opportunities. Some MSs warned against using their stocks to pay for this. The UK noted the withdrawal of Iceland from talks on managing mackerel stocks which impacted on the EU-Norway talks; this attitude was unhelpful and the Commission should be firm.

On the Agriculture items: the Commission will act to ban 1, 3—dichloropropene as there was no qualified majority either for or against the proposal. The Commission's recent report on the potential for the European Food Safety Authority to charge fees was discussed very briefly, with some MSs supporting its conclusion that a full impact assessment is required to inform any subsequent proposals. The Commission presented its paper on the Farm Advisory Service (FAS), highlighting a need to improve the targeting of advice, especially in reaching small and medium-sized farms. The subjects covered by FAS needed to go beyond cross compliance to cover competitiveness and innovation. Recommendations would be taken forward in due course.

The first discussion on the Commission Communication on CAP restricted Ministers' interventions to three minutes each. Most MSs broadly welcomed the communication as a useful starting point. There was general endorsement for the continuation of the current two pillar structure of the CAP. A number of important themes emerged during the debate, which focused largely on what the communication was missing:

There was support for continuing direct payments (DPs) to farmers, with new MSs calling for their equalisation. Some MSs rejected a transitional period at the beginning of the next financial perspective (FP). The abolition of historical references periods was welcomed. France, Germany and Greece, however, cautioned that new objective criteria should not result in a flat rate payment: DPs needed to be allocated fairly, taking account of regional costs and farm structures. A few MSs resisted the intention to cap payments to large farms. The UK called for substantial cuts to the EU budget, which should include material cuts to the CAP budget and with progress on reducing reliance on direct subsidies leading eventually to their abolition. Others, however, called for a strong or adequate CAP budget commensurate with its challenging policy objectives.

All MSs called for a significant effort to simplify CAP rules. The UK noted that some of the Commission's ideas looked too complex. The Commission will establish an expert group to work alongside those drafting legislation to ensure that new measures did not increase administrative burdens for farmers or national authorities.

Many MSs were sceptical of the Commission's proposal to green pillar 1, as this could work counter to the simplification objective. However, a number welcomed the principle of securing better environmental benefits. The Commission insisted that new measures on environmental compliance would not increase burdens and would generally take the form of guidance on the application of cross compliance provisions.

MSs queried the confused treatment of less favoured areas (LFAs) in the Communication. Some wanted LFA payments to remain in the second pillar, whereas others favoured an additional LFA uplift in pillar one. Some MSs supported the Commission's intentions to provide a small farmer payment and to restrict payments to active farmers, although clarity was sought on definitions of "small" and "active".

MSs welcomed the retention of a specific pillar devoted to rural development. The UK called for a greater share of a reduced CAP budget to go to this. Some new MSs called for pillar two resources to be concentrated on MSs with the greatest modernisation needs. MSs were broadly supportive of the continued focus on competiveness and agri-environment. Territorial cohesion was frequently stressed.

The presidency said that the issue would be discussed on 13 December. The incoming Hungarian presidency stated that it intended to seek a conclusion at the March Council.

Under Any Other Business:

There was a short Commission paper on the current inter-institutional blockage on long-term fisheries management plans. In its view a large majority of MSs (not the UK) were not being realistic: the European Parliament had a legitimate interest in setting these under the Lisbon treaty and the Council could not cling to this power. It wanted to begin a dialogue to resolve the matter quickly.

The presidency presented its information notes on the review of the European plant health regime and the international conference on animal welfare education.

On the 2011 Budget the Commission took the opportunity to sensitise MSs to difficulties with the reimbursement of DPs, if the new draft budget was not adopted. National budgets would take the strain of some 75% of direct payments being made by national authorities in the first few months of 2011, while operating under a system of twelfths. However, problems were unlikely to arise for market management or rural development expenditure, which had flatter spending profiles. There was no discussion.

The Netherlands presented its note on the conference on agriculture, food security and climate change.

France presented its note on the aims of the French presidency of the G20 in the field of agriculture highlighting four themes: increasing transparency about global stock reserves, enhancing the moral behaviour of market operators, co-ordinating international crisis management and addressing price volatility.

Finally, the Italian Minister tabled a point related to the food labelling proposal due to be discussed at the EPSCO Council formation on 7 December. The Italians want to see the manufacturer of products identified on the label. The UK responded that this would not be acceptable given that this information is not meaningful to consumers, adds burdens to businesses and has the potential for negative impact on competition.

Single Payment Scheme

The Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr James Paice): In my statement of 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 77WS, I promised to keep the House informed of the progress of the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) towards its 2010 single payment scheme (SPS) payment targets.

As at Wednesday 15 December, RPA has made payments totalling some £1.16 billion to 85,060 farmers (80.6%). The agency continues to strive to meet its target to pay 85% of eligible claimants by the end of December. RPA has also now issued letters to all those farmers who are unlikely to be paid this month.

Progress toward the December target will be reviewed again today by the RPA oversight board, with a view to ensuring the money reaches farmers as early as possible while also protecting taxpayers' interests. Joined by new permanent RPA chief executive (Mark Grimshaw) from 17 January, the board will focus the agency's attention in the new year on the still more challenging target of making 95% of the value of SPS payments by the end of March 2011. I will continue to keep the House informed.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Victims of Terrorist Incidents Overseas

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr Jeremy Browne): Since 2004 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has offered specific assistance for British victims of terrorist incidents overseas and their families. Originally known as the aftercare plan, but renamed exceptional assistance measures (EAM) in 2008, it was introduced in recognition of the fact that many travel insurance policies explicitly exclude acts of terrorism from their cover. EAM allows Ministers to activate special assistance to victims of terrorist attacks above the standard consular package. This can include medical evacuation, payment of immediate medical expenses and repatriation. It is only ever activated in extremis.

When the policy was first introduced in 2004, EAM could be awarded to any British victim of a terrorist incident abroad, regardless of whether or not the person had travel insurance. However, in June 2008 the Government at the time decided to impose restrictions on EAM eligibility, excluding those victims who did not have travel insurance.

I have decided to overturn this decision and restore EAM for all British nationals affected by a terrorist attack overseas, regardless of whether or not they have travel insurance. Acts of terrorism are singularly heinous crimes, usually targeting innocent people at random. It is right that all British victims of terrorist attacks overseas can receive the same level of support from the Government.

EAM only covers incidents overseas that are deemed to be acts of terrorism by Her Majesty's Government. They do not replace travel insurance. British nationals travelling overseas are strongly advised to take out comprehensive travel insurance. Those that do not and are involved in accidents or incidents often deeply regret it when faced with huge bills.

Key elements of the exceptional assistance measures are:

i. The measures will only be activated as a last resort, where financial assistance is not made available through other means, i.e. from the Government of the country where the incident took place, insurance providers or other agencies and organisations, and in a situation we deem to be terrorist in nature;

ii. Assistance, under these measures, will not be made available to those who have travelled to a country or region for which the FCO had advised against all travel;

iii. The measures do not cover medical care in the UK or long-term care in relation to conditions relating to the effects of the terrorist incident;

iv. These measures will be activated on a case-by-case basis by ministerial decision.

HEALTH

Value-Based Pricing (Consultation)

The Secretary of State for Health (Mr Andrew Lansley): I am launching today a consultation entitled: "A new value-based approach to the pricing of branded medicines".

The consultation document sets out this Government's proposals for introducing a system of value-based pricing for medicines, as stated in the coalition agreement. Such a system would enable patients to access the medicines and treatments their doctor advises they need by establishing a closer link between the price of a new branded medicine and the value which it offers in terms of benefits to patients, reflecting unmet need, therapeutic innovation, and where appropriate, benefit to society.

While the current system of pricing medicines has tried to achieve a balance between reasonable prices for the NHS and fair return for the industry to develop new medicines, it does not promote innovation or patient access in the way that we are looking for. We have committed to honouring the terms of the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme 2009 until its expiry, but there is a need to reform the way in which we pay for medicines from 2014 onwards. As we have made clear through the establishment of the cancer drugs fund prior to 2014, we are enabling NHS clinicians to have better access to the medicines required for their patients.

This consultation is an important opportunity to engage with different groups in order to gain their views on how we should best reflect the value of medicines in order to deliver the best health outcomes for patients. This consultation sets out the Government's initial thoughts and invites engagement from interested parties in order that we can begin to develop a future model of medicines' pricing.

Copies of the consultation document have been placed in the Library. Copies are available to hon. Members from the Vote Office and to noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office.

New Dental Contracts (Pilot Schemes)

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Mr Simon Burns): We said in the coalition agreement that we would introduce a new dental contract based on registration capitation and quality to increase access and improve oral health, particularly of children. We are today announcing the publication of our proposals for piloting that new contract, and inviting expressions of interest in taking part in the pilots.

The current dental contract, which was introduced by the previous Administration in 2006, has been a bone of contention for dentists since its inception. The House of Commons Health Select Committee report published in July 2008 found that the contract had failed to solve problems of access, that the UDA-based system (that is units of dental activity) of remuneration was extremely unpopular with dentists, and that commissioning of dentistry by primary care trusts was often of poor quality. It called for registration to be reintroduced.

Under our planned new contract dentists will be rewarded for the quality of care they deliver for patients rather than the number of treatments and, through registration, patients will have the security of continuing care. Our reforms will give dentists the encouragement they need to provide a service that meets the needs of today's population. The Select Committee noted that there was widespread criticism that the UDA system introduced in the 2006 contract was not piloted. We have decided that we will carry out pilots as part of the development of our reforms.

To help us develop our proposals, we have taken advice from a national expert steering group, containing representatives of the dental profession, and patients, and NHS commissioners. Professor Jimmy Steele, author of the independent review of dentistry published last year, was also a member of the group.

The three different models set out in the publication will be piloted in 50 to 60 areas around the country from next April. The three pilot models will be slightly different in order to provide information and evidence on different aspects of the proposals, which will then help inform the development of a new national contract.

The proposals we are announcing today mark a first step towards delivering this new and better system of dentistry. In the light of the pilots we will bring forward proposals for a new national contract, with the intention of bringing forward legislation.

Drug-Related Crime and Rehabilitation

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Paul Burstow): Professor Lord Patel of Bradford OBE was asked by the Department of Health and the Ministry of Justice to lead a review of drug treatment and interventions in prisons and for people on release from prisons in England and provide a report, with recommendations.

The report aims to raise the ambition about what can be achieved in regard to drug treatment and interventions in prisons and to consider efficiencies and cost effectiveness.

Lord Patel's report has been placed in the Library. Copies are available to hon. Members from the Vote Office and to noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office.

I would like to thank Lord Patel and his review group for the thoroughness of their work.

As outlined in the coalition programme for government, we are aiming to overhaul the system of rehabilitation to reduce offending, and to ensure that sentencing for drug use helps offenders to come off drugs. We want to promote innovation in service provision and commissioning. Payment by results will be an important tool in achieving progress.

In the comprehensive spending review, the need for continued, substantial investment in drug treatment was reaffirmed. As part of our commitment to ensuring that there is local pooling of resources it has been agreed that some budgets previously held by the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice will transfer to the Department of Health from April 2011. This will allow us to look in a more joined-up way across the total spend on drug treatment to improve the treatment journey and avoid wasting resources.

We welcome Lord Patel's contribution to the important drugs treatment debate and will be looking carefully at the recommendations and evidence his group has collected. This Government believe that given the substantial investment in drugs and the strong association between the use of drugs and reoffending, we should be ambitious in our aims to improve efficiency and effectiveness, focusing on recovery outcomes, encouraging offenders to come off drugs.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Control Order Powers

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mrs Theresa May): Section 14(1) of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 (the 2005 Act), requires the Secretary of State to report to Parliament as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of every relevant three-month period on the exercise of the control order powers during that period.

The level of information provided will always be subject to slight variations based on operational advice.

As set out in previous statements the Government are reviewing control orders as part of a wider review of counter-terrorist and security powers and measures. The Government will report on the outcome of this review shortly.

As explained in previous quarterly statements on control orders, control order obligations are tailored to the individual concerned and are based on the terrorism-related risk that individual poses. Each control order is kept under regular review to ensure that the obligations remain necessary and proportionate. The Home Office continues to hold control order review groups (CORGs) every quarter, with representation from law enforcement and intelligence agencies, to keep the obligations in every control order under regular and formal review and to facilitate a review of appropriate exit strategies. During this reporting period, four CORGs were held in relation to the orders in force at the time. In addition, further meetings were held on an ad-hoc basis as specific issues arose.

During the period 11 September 2010 to 10 December 2010, one non-derogating control order has been made, with the permission of the court, and served. One control order has been renewed in accordance with section 2(6) of the 2005 Act in this reporting period. Two control orders expired during this reporting period as it was not considered necessary to renew the orders for a further 12 months. One control order, made in a previous quarter but never served, expired during this reporting period.

In total, as of 10 December 2010, there were eight control orders in force, all of which were in respect of British citizens. All of these control orders were non-derogating. Three individuals subject to a control order lived in the Metropolitan Police Service area; the remaining individuals lived in other police force areas.

No criminal proceedings for breach of a control order were concluded during this reporting period. However, one set of criminal proceedings against one individual who was formerly subject to a control order and three other individuals for conspiracy to breach a control order was concluded in the reporting period 11 June 2010 to 10 September 2010. This followed a CPS decision that prosecution was no longer in the public interest. It was not possible to include this information in the previous statement laid on 16 September 2010.

During this reporting period, 34 modifications of control order obligations were made. Twelve requests to modify control order obligations were refused.

Section 10(1) of the 2005 Act provides a right of appeal against a decision by the Secretary of State to renew a non-derogating control order or to modify an obligation imposed by a non-derogating control order without consent. No appeals have been lodged with the High Court during this reporting period under section 10(1) of the 2005 Act. A right of appeal is also provided by section 10(3) of the 2005 Act against a decision by the Secretary of State to refuse a request by a controlled person to revoke their order or to modify any obligation under their order. During this reporting period one appeal has been lodged with the High Court under section 10(3) of the 2005 Act.

On 15 September 2010 one individual subject to a control order was granted permission to appeal to the Court of Appeal against the High Court judgment in the substantive judicial review proceedings under section 3(10) of the 2005 Act relating to his control order.

No court judgments in relation to control orders have been handed down during this reporting period.

Immigration (Detention of Children)

The Minister for Immigration (Damian Green): The UK has a long tradition of welcoming people from across the globe and we can be especially proud of our record in granting refuge to those who have been persecuted. When those people include families with children, we have a particular responsibility to ensure that we approach the task with compassion and humanity.

That is why one of this Government's first acts was to commit to ending the detention of children for immigration purposes. This Government believe that children should not be detained in our immigration system, but we must ensure that those with no right to be here leave the UK. This is a difficult issue—we need to balance the welfare of children and families with the need to maintain a robust and workable immigration system.

In June I set up a review of how we work with families in the immigration system. The Home Office launched a consultation which received over 340 responses from different organisations and members of the public. We also sought the views of interested parties through a working group co-chaired with the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, received recommendations from a further expert group convened by Citizens UK and examined how other countries manage family removals. We have also worked closely with the Department for Education as the lead Department for children and safeguarding in England and will continue to do so on implementation.

We have already begun to take action where we can. Since the beginning of June, fewer than 50 families have been held in immigration detention—compared to over 300 over the same period last year—and the average stay in detention has been reduced from 15 days to 4 days.

But we need to go further. With immediate effect no children will be detained at the Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre.

We are now implementing a fundamentally new approach to the whole end-to-end process of working with families in the immigration system. This new system will strengthen families' trust and confidence in the immigration system, maintain public confidence in the Government's ability to control the UK's borders and ensure that families with children are treated humanely and in a way that meets our international obligations and our statutory duties in relation to children's safety and welfare.

Working in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, we will continue to improve the quality of our asylum decision making through our asylum improvement project. We will develop best practice for working with families and will increase the specialist skills of our staff. Working with partners from local authorities, the voluntary sector and local communities, we will continue to test new arrangements for providing early access to legal advice and practical support and guidance to families.

In those cases where an application has been refused and all appeals have been exhausted, we will assist families in departing voluntarily, including with financial assistance where necessary. UK Border Agency staff will hold a dedicated family return conference with each family to help them understand the options available for their return and prepare for it.

We will, of course, still require families to depart who have no right to stay here and who do not depart voluntarily. But rather than being detained, they will instead be given a minimum of two-weeks' notice of their departure date while they remain in the community. This extended notification period—up from 72 hours at present—will ensure that the family can prepare properly for their return. Families will then be given the opportunity to check themselves in at the port of departure.

At this point families will have had every opportunity to comply and exercise some control over the timing and manner of their departure. They will have had the opportunity to challenge the decision that they must return in court, supported by legal aid and voluntary sector partners; they will have had the opportunity to discuss their options at family return conferences; and they will have had the possibility to leave voluntarily, with a financially supported return.

Where families still fail to co-operate, their case will be referred to a new independent family returns panel, which will ensure that the welfare of the children involved is fully considered in a tailored returns plan. The panel will be independently chaired and include experts on health and child safeguarding. Once the new process is implemented, the panel will be able to recommend using any existing mechanism or policy available to the department to manage returns, but specifically excluding detention in an immigration removal centre.

As a very last resort for those rare cases when families fail to co-operate with all other options, the panel will have the option to refer the family to a new type of accommodation for only the last 72 hours before departure.

This accommodation will not be an immigration removal centre. It will have a family-friendly environment, with an entirely different look and feel. The site will be secure but will respect family privacy and independence. We will be seeking third sector involvement in the running of the accommodation.

This accommodation, which will only be used for very short periods of time, will be for those families who have consistently refused to comply with the process and whom the independent panel advise need that level of oversight. Once there, families will be allowed to leave the premises with permission on a risk-assessed basis. We will allow children to have the opportunity to leave the premises subject to a clear and transparent risk and safeguarding assessment and suitable supervision arrangements. We will also ensure that there are suitable adults on site in Tinsley House from January to allow children to have the opportunity to leave the centre following a risk and safeguarding assessment by UK Border Agency. The panel will encourage accountability and transparency in the process by producing an annual report, which will include all cases referred to the new accommodation.

In addition to ensuring the removal of families with no right to stay here, we must maintain our ability to protect the border. Other countries have kept the ability to detain those arriving at the border for a short period and we will need this capability as well. We will retain Tinsley House at Gatwick for this purpose when necessary. Families detained trying to enter Britain illegally are usually returned on the next available flight and within 24 hours.

The process I have outlined balances the welfare of children and families with the need to maintain a robust immigration system which can remove people with no right to remain here.

As we put the new process into practice we will continue to learn and improve. We will work with communities, the voluntary sector, local authorities, the Department for Education, and families themselves to make the new process work. At the heart of our new approach will be the fundamental need to safeguard the welfare of children.

Further information on the review can be found on the UK Border Agency website and a copy will be placed in the House Library.

Gang-Related Violence

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (James Brokenshire): Gangs cause significant and lasting harm to our communities by fuelling violence, creating an atmosphere of fear and drawing young people into criminality. The Government are committed to tackling gang-related violence by giving local partners the legal powers they need to prevent gang-related violence and encourage gang members to exit their gang lifestyles.

As part of this approach, from 31 January 2011 police and local authorities will be able to apply to a county court for an injunction to prevent an individual from engaging in, or encouraging or assisting, gang-related violence, or to protect an individual from such violence. This new civil tool will enable courts to place a range of prohibitions and requirements on the behaviour and activities of an individual; providing strong support to help those who want to leave violent gangs and placing tough restrictions on those who don't.

Statutory guidance on injunctions to prevent gang-related violence has been produced to help ensure their appropriate and effective use. Copies of the statutory guidance have been laid before the House and will be available from the Vote Office.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Development Ministers' Foreign Affairs Council

The Secretary of State for International Development (Mr Andrew Mitchell): The Foreign Affairs Council (Development) took place in Brussels on 9 December. Due to priority parliamentary business that day, my ministerial colleagues and I were unable to attend. The UK was represented by the Permanent Representative to the EU (Kim Darroch) and the Director of International Relations for the Department for International Development (Anthony Smith). Both officials attended with clear direction from Ministers on relevant policy priorities. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Baroness Ashton, chaired the meeting.

Future of EU Development Policy

EU Development Commissioner (Andris Piebalgs) introduced his "Green Paper on EU Development Policy in Support of Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development". He confirmed that once the public consultation had concluded in January 2011, the Commission would begin drafting a communication on the results. This will include toolkits about how different work-streams can be taken forward.

Ministers broadly welcomed the paper and the opportunities it brings to think afresh about the future of EU development policy. The wide-ranging discussion covered issues including growth, human rights, gender, agriculture and sustainable development. The UK intervention welcomed the focus on growth and called for the prioritisation of actions that can deliver impact and results and demonstrate value for money.

Ministers were invited to provide written comments on the issues raised by the Green Paper in early 2011.

Afghanistan

Commissioner Piebalgs and the EU Special Representative in Afghanistan (Vygaudas Ušackas) briefed Ministers about the latest situation in Afghanistan. They stressed their long-term commitment to development and to the transition of responsibilities to the Afghan Government, based on the approach agreed at the 2010 Kabul conference. Ministers confirmed their strong support for this approach. It was also stressed that the EU action plan, agreed by EU Foreign Ministers in October 2009, offered the best way forward in terms of better co-ordinating European efforts in Afghanistan.

Innovative Finance

In a discussion led by the French Development Minister, the Council debated innovative financing mechanisms. The UK joined other member states in welcoming the exploration of a range of innovative financing opportunities, while emphasising that these should complement, and not deflect from, existing official development assistance targets. The Commission was invited to continue working on the technical feasibility of innovative financing mechanisms and exploring their potential impact.

Haiti

Ministers discussed the severe situation in Haiti, and agreed on the continuing importance of co-ordinating relief efforts. Commissioner Piebalgs noted that €325 million of the €522 million pledged for reconstruction in Haiti was now programmed, and that, to date, €61 million had been disbursed. The Commission is preparing a communication on reconstruction efforts, with the aim of effectively communicating the results of EU support in advance of the 12 January anniversary of the earthquake.

Mutual Accountability and Transparency

The Swedish Development Minister led a brief exchange of views on the importance of mutual accountability and transparency between European donors and partner countries. This is crucial in order to demonstrate the legitimacy of development assistance, and to help partner countries make better informed investment decisions. The UK strongly supported this approach—a key priority of the coalition Government—and suggested an aid transparency guarantee, similar to the one launched in the UK, be adopted at pan-European level.

The Council also adopted conclusions on mutual accountability and transparency as an "A" point without discussion. These can be viewed here: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st17/st17477.en10.pdf.

International Development Conferences in 2011

Over dinner, there was an exchange of views about the least developed countries (LDC) summit that will take place in Istanbul in May 2011. The Council noted the importance of ensuring a focused EU position in advance of the summit. The Commission will prepare a draft EU position paper in January 2011. The UK's suggestion of a focus on growth and vulnerability was welcomed.

The dinner concluded with a short discussion about the fourth high-level forum on aid effectiveness that will take place in Busan, Korea, in November 2011. The UK joined other member states in stressing the need for a high-level political debate at the forum, rather than purely technical discussions. The Council aims to agree a common position ahead of the forum in May 2011.

International Development Association of the World Bank

The Secretary of State for International Development (Mr Andrew Mitchell): The International Development Association (IDA) is the part of the World Bank that provides assistance to the poorest countries. The international negotiations to agree its work and funding for the next three years concluded on Wednesday 15 December, and I wish to inform the House of the outcomes.

Thanks to UK pressure, for the first time, IDA has set out some of the results it will deliver with this replenishment. These are

Improving the Lives of Poor People: IDA has set itself the target of:

Providing 80 million people with access to improved water sources

Providing 2 million people with access to improved sanitation facilities

Immunising 200 million children

Providing 30 million more people with health services, including 2 million pregnant women

Recruiting and training 2 million teachers

Helping countries create wealth and jobs: IDA provides a range of support including funding key infrastructure, such as power, irrigation and roads. This is essential for boosting trade, encouraging private investment, and enabling people to access markets, schools and health centres. IDA has set itself the target of constructing and rehabilitating 80,000 km of roads.

Help poor countries cope with shocks: The financial crisis, the spike in food prices, and natural disasters have all put poor people under enormous strain recently. A new facility is being established in IDA that will enable the bank to offer countries additional support, for example to Haiti for reconstruction after the earthquake.

Throughout the negotiations, the Government have pressed the bank to step up its efforts to improve the lives of poor women and girls and those who live in fragile states, and the bank has made some clear commitments. These include more support to countries like Afghanistan.

IDA is an important and effective channel for international efforts to achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs). As the emerging findings of the Government's comprehensive multilateral aid review demonstrate, its high-quality analysis and the deep expertise of its staff are drawn on by Governments in IDA countries to develop robust national poverty reduction strategies and make good public spending choices. In its own programmes, IDA delivers flexible assistance in support of countries' priorities. As well as investing in areas such as health, education and agriculture it also helps countries develop the institutions, the policies and practices that underpin sustained poverty reduction and economic growth, for example helping to strengthen accountability and tackle corruption. The bank has a strong track record of robust evaluation and lesson learning, and its new transparency policy puts it at the forefront of multilateral agencies in this regard.

In light of IDA'S strengths, its central role in helping the international community achieve the MDGs, and the results and reforms it has committed to deliver, the UK will provide an average of £888 million a year for the next three years. The result of the negotiations, following all the donor pledges and action from bank management, is that IDA will have $49.3 billion (£32.4 billion) to invest in tackling poverty in the three years starting in July 2011, of which the UK's burden share is 12%.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (11th Annual Report)

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr Owen Paterson): I have today laid before this House a copy of the "Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's

Annual Report and Accounts for 2009-10", in accordance with schedule 7 paragraphs 5(2) and 7(3)(b) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

This is the 11th annual report published by the Commission.

"A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: Next Steps" (Responses)

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr Hugo Swire): I have today published responses to the previous Government's consultation on "A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: Next Steps". The responses are available on the NIO website: www.nio.gov.uk.

A total of approximately 36,492 responses were received. There were 232 substantive responses and approximately 36,260 email and mail/freepost mailshots that were sent as part of campaigns by various groups. Individual mailshot responses have not been published on the NIO website due to the high volume received; however, sample versions have been made available.

There was considerable support from human rights and community groups for a wide-ranging Bill of Rights along the lines of that recommended by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. They expressed concern that the proposals in the consultation document fell well short of this.

The consultation also demonstrated opposition to a wide-ranging Bill of Rights and support instead for a more limited set of rights that reflected the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland. This divergence of views was also reflected in the submissions made by political parties in Northern Ireland.

The Government will continue to consider how best to address this issue, but continue to urge all sides to work together to help build consensus on the best way to proceed.

Robert Hamill and Rosemary Nelson Inquiries

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr Owen Paterson): It is with regret that I must inform the House of a delay to the publication of the reports of the Robert Hamill and Rosemary Nelson inquiries.

The Robert Hamill inquiry has recently informed me that it expects to deliver its report to me by the end of February 2011. The Rosemary Nelson inquiry informs me that it currently expects to deliver its report by the end of April 2011. I have written to both inquiries to ask them to expedite their work and to continue to bear down on costs in these remaining months.

As with the Bloody Sunday and the Billy Wright inquiries, it is my intention to publish these reports as soon as practicable after I receive them, and I will inform and update the House accordingly.

Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr Owen Paterson): I have laid before Parliament the Third Report of Robert Whalley CB, independent reviewer of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 (the "2007 Act").

This Third Report provides an assessment of the operation of sections 21 to 32 of the 2007 Act and the procedures adopted by the Brigade Commander 38 (Irish) Brigade for receiving, investigating and responding to complaints. The report covers the period 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2010.

The report highlights the security situation in the past year and the activities of residual terrorist groups who have been dangerous and disruptive and remain heavily involved in organised crime. The reviewer states that the police have had to deal with more threats and attacks this year, and this has led to a substantial increase (22%) in the use of stop and question and stop and search across the range of police powers. He also makes note of the heavy demand for the services of ammunition technical officers (ATOs).

The reviewer acknowledges that the police have responded to his recommendation to further develop recording systems and notes some improvement from his limited sampling of the records; however, there is still some way to go in pursuit of best practice. He welcomes the development of electronic recording which the police are pursuing and the thematic review which is being conducted by the human rights adviser to the Policing Board into the comparative use of police powers and development of best practice. He comments that it will significantly complement and enhance work in this area.

Mr Whalley highlights the marked decrease in military complaints and notes that the departure of the Pumas of 230 Squadron RAF has significantly altered the pattern of military flying in Northern Ireland. He states that the complaints system is efficient and responsive and must continue to function as effectively as it does now. He also emphasises the importance of engaging complainants, and suggests that it should be standard practice to offer a visit to Aldergrove (if not a flight in a helicopter) when a repeat complaint is made. He recommends the flying station at Aldergrove should take it as a high-priority task to keep the website on planned flying times up to date.

The Chief Constable and the Brigade Commander 38 (Irish) Brigade have both welcomed the independent reviewer's report and the recommendations made. I too would like to thank Robert Whalley for his work and for the recommendations contained in his third report. I will consider them carefully.

PRIME MINISTER

Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (11th Report)

The Prime Minister (Mr David Cameron): I have today published the 11th report of the independent Advisory Committee on Business Appointments.

The report provides an account of the Committee's work in giving advice about appointments that senior Crown servants and former Ministers wish to take up after leaving Crown service. The report covers the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010.

Copies of the report have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

TRANSPORT

Coastguard Services (Modernisation)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mike Penning): The United Kingdom is fortunate to have strong and effective front-line search and rescue capabilities, many of which are provided by volunteers, including some 3,500 volunteer coastguards carrying out coastal rescues, the lifeboats operated by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and the volunteer mountain rescue teams. I would like to pay tribute to the dedication and commitment of these volunteers who provide a long-standing example of the contribution that individuals can make to the society in which they live.

Our front-line search and rescue services could not, however, function effectively and save the lives that they do without effective arrangements to identify and manage incidents, including directing the best placed and most suitable rescue assets to the scene. These arrangements are provided through our regular coastguard officers who also monitor ship movements around our coasts, provide information and services to seafarers and recreational water users, operate vessel traffic monitoring schemes in some locations, including the English channel, contribute to counter-pollution activities in our waters and support our volunteer coastguard force. They are currently located in 18 maritime rescue co-ordination centres around the UK.

The coastguard has a long and distinguished history. But in common with all public services it cannot stand still. Our seas are becoming busier with larger ships and increasing numbers of offshore renewable energy platforms, making key areas of our seas more congested. There are also increasing numbers of people using our beaches, coastlines and seas for leisure activities.

The current organisation of the coastguard — which dates back some 40 years — is not well placed to respond to these challenges. The lack of national co-ordination between the centres can result in limited resilience and an uneven distribution of the workload, especially during busy periods.

The latest technologies offer opportunities to address these issues and to modernise the coastguard enabling it to deliver a more integrated and improved level of service, at lower cost, with better-rewarded staff taking on increased responsibilities and with enhanced career opportunities.

With these objectives in mind, I am today launching a 14-week consultation about the modernisation of the coastguard service. The consultation document, which is available in the Libraries of both Houses and on the Maritime and Coastguard Agency website: www.mcga.gov.uk, sets out proposals to:

Establish two nationally networked maritime operations centres, located at Aberdeen and the Southampton/Portsmouth area, capable of managing maritime incidents wherever and whenever they occur and with improved information systems, together with a 24-hour centre at Dover looking over the busy channel traffic separation scheme.

Provide for five other sub-centres: fully integrated into the national network around the coast and operating during daylight hours. On the basis of an evaluation of the existing sites and the facilities available at them, it is proposed three of these should be located at Falmouth, Humber and Swansea. We also require sub-centres at either Belfast or Liverpool and either Stornoway or Shetland. The case for selection between these locations is more marginal. We are therefore inviting comments and information about factors that should influence the choice of sites for these two sub-centres.

Provide high quality and demanding jobs for our coastguards, with the job weight and pay reflecting the increased demands placed upon them in line with civil service pay guidelines.

Strengthen the leadership and support provided to our volunteer coastguards in the coastguard rescue service.

Improve present levels of service to the public while reducing costs.

The proposals do not affect the small centre operated by the coastguard alongside the Port of London Authority on the Thames in London.

These changes will strengthen the coastguard service by dealing with potential points of weakness in current structures and adding resilience throughout the system while also maintaining strong regional links and enhancing front-line rescue services through the volunteer coastguard.

Search and Rescue Helicopters (Procurement)

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Philip Hammond): Together with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence, I had planned to announce to the House today an intention to proceed with negotiations with the preferred bidder for the planned procurement of search and rescue helicopter capability. However, the preferred bidder has informed the Ministry of Defence within the last 48 hours that it has become aware of a possible issue in connection with its bid to provide the UK search and rescue capability, which was the basis of its selection as the preferred bidder as announced in February 2010.

In the circumstances it is not appropriate for us to proceed with the planned announcement until the status of this issue has been clarified.

My right hon. Friend and I will make a further statement to the House as soon as we are able to provide further information and to set out our plans for proceeding to secure the provision of search and rescue helicopter capability in the future. We regret the further uncertainty that this entails for all those involved in providing the UK's search and rescue service.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Remploy (Annual Report and Financial Statements 2010)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Maria Miller): Remploy has today published its annual report and accounts for 2010. Copies will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses later today.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 20 December 2010

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Science and Research Funding (2011-12 to 2014-15)

The Minister for Universities and Science (Mr David Willetts): The coalition Government are publishing today the allocation of science and research funding for 2011-12 to 2014-15.

Our world class science and research base is inherently valuable, as well as critical to promoting economic growth. Despite enormous pressure on public spending, the £4.6 billion per annum funding for science and research programmes has been protected in cash terms and ring fenced against future pressures during the spending review period. For the first time HE research funding in England has been included within this ring fence, providing overall stability and certainty to the research base.

Allocations for resource are set out in table 1, below, and allocations for capital are in table 2.

This Government are committed to efficiency, prioritisation and reform. We shall delay capital investment to maximise investment in research projects and in people undertaking research. The Government intend to announce during 2011 the allocation of funding to a small number of further projects on the 2010 large facilities roadmap.

Savings from improved efficiency will be recycled directly within the ring fence. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) will reform its quality-related (QR) funding for research with a greater focus on research excellence and reform higher education innovation funding with a greater focus on business interaction.

Collaboration is one of the key themes of these allocations. There will be significant collaboration among research councils, and among universities, tackling issues of national importance, often working with the TSB.

There will also be greater coherence among HEFCE and the research councils. For example HEFCE and the research councils will work together so that support and incentives to bring universities and business closer together are delivered coherently.

These allocations provide funding for the arts, humanities and social sciences as well as STEM to pursue vital research. Outstanding researchers in all fields will be funded to pursue curiosity driven work and to define their own areas of scholarship. We are also putting the new UK Space Agency on a firm footing.

The allocation will allow research councils, HEFCE and the national academies to maintain the flow of talented new researchers and maintain national capability. It will enable them to provide researchers with access to key large scale research infrastructure, both here and abroad. Funding bodies will concentrate on research centres of proven excellence, with the critical mass to address national challenges and compete internationally and the expertise to collaboration with business.

A copy of the allocation document has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The grant letter sent by the Secretary of State to HEFCE today also includes details relevant to science and research funding. A copy of that letter has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Table 1 Resource

	Baseline 2010-11	*2011-12*	*2012-13*	*2013-14*	*2014-15*	*TOTALS*	*Final Year to Baseline*
	£'000	*£'000*	*£'000*	*£'000*	*£'000*	*£'000*	
Research Councils	*2,549,353*	*2,596,196*	*2,573,678*	*2,586,641*	*2,599,812*	*10,356,327*	*101.98%*
AHRC	100,717	99,881	98,370	98,370	98,370	394,993	97.67%
BBSRC	362,341	370,306	359,471	351,471	351,471	1,432,718	97.00%
ESRC	158,061	155,690	153,319	153,319	153,319	615,648	97.00%
EPSRC	771,289	759,720	748,150	748,150	748,150	3,004,171	97.00%
MRC	545,585	536,172	546,243	559,894	574,641	2,216,950	105.33%
NERC	298,071	298,600	297,129	300,129	289,129	1,184,987	97.00%
STFC - Core Programme	177,519	190,060	172,200	172,200	172,190	706,650	97.00%
STFC – Cross-Council facilities[1]	66,800	77,170	79,280	81,410	89,470	327,330	133.94%
STFC – International Subscriptions[2]	68,970	108,598	119,515	121,697	123,071	472,881	178.44%
HEFCE	*1,731,300*	*1,662,112*	*1,699,578*	*1,685,689*	*1,686,321*	*6,733,700*	*97.40%*
QR Research	1,618,300	1,549,112	1,586,578	1,572,689	1,573,321	6,281,700	97.22%
HEIF[3]	113,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	452,000	100.00%
National Academies	*87,832*	*87,465*	*86,547*	*86,547*	*86,547*	*347,106*	*98.54%*
Royal Society	48,558	47,830	47,101	47,101	47,101	189,13[illegible]	97.00%
British Academy	26,448	27,001	27,005	27,005	27,005	108,015	102.10%
Royal Academy of Eng	12,826	12,634	12,441	12,441	12,441	49,957	97.00%
Other Programmes	*43,616*	*24,496*	*24,140*	*24,165*	*24,005*	*96,805*	*55.04%*
Science & Society	15,441	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	52,000	84.19%
International	5,104	5,095	4,740	4,765	4,605	19,205	90.22%
Foresight	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	11,200	100.00%

Table 1 Resource

	Baseline 2010-11 £'000	2011-12 £'000	2012-13 £'000	2013-14 £'000	2014-15 £'000	TOTALS £'000	Final Year to Baseline
Evidence & Evaluation	20,271	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	14,400	46.32%
UK Space Agency	*163,805*	*205,637*	*191,963*	*192,864*	*179,221*	*769,685*	*109.41%*
Total S&R Resource	*4,575,906*	*4,575,906*	*4,575,906*	*4,575,906*	*4,575,906*	*18,303,622*	*100.00%*

[1] Operated by STFC on behalf of all Research Councils.

[2] Managed by STFC on behalf of all Research Councils. Total resource expenditure on international subscriptions in 2010-11, including the additional exchange rate costs was £103 million. The SRIO allocations are at the exchange rates prevailing in early December 2010 and reflect a shift in funding from capital to resource.

[3] HEIF will also include £37 million pa from HEFCE, taking the total for each year to £150 million.

Table 2 Capital

Council	Baseline 2010-11 £'000	2011-12 £'000	2012-13 £'000	2013-14 £'000	2014-15 £'000	Total £'000	Final Year to Baseline
Research Councils	*393,438*	*239,821*	*199,393*	*181,430*	*180,967*	*801,611*	*46.00%*
AHRC	3,150	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
BBSRC	66,480	38,000	29,700	29,700	29,700	127,100	44.68%
ESRC	20,600	18,700	13,700	12,700	12,700	57,800	61.65%
EPSRC	49,261	31,000	35,000	25,000	25,000	116,000	50.75%
MRC	134,517	33,000	29,000	31,000	31,000	124,000	23.05%
NERC	34,183	32,200	17,800	17,800	17,800	85,600	52.07%
STFC - Core Programme	85,247	19,630	21,981	14,237	14,169	70,017	75.98%
STFC - Cross-Council Facilities		21,070	21,919	22,463	22,931	88,383	
STFC - International Subscriptions[4]		46,221	30,293	28,530	27,667	132,711	
Large Facilities Capital Fund	103,380	115,279	61,307	47,769	128,132	352,487	123.94%
UK Space Agency	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	76,000	100.00%
HEX Capital HEFCE	166,952	75,170	90,970	90,160	101,500	357,800	60.80%
HEI Research Capital England	158,420	53,199	64,377	63,810	71,831	253,217	45.34%
HEI Research Capital Scotland[5]	23,622	8,620	10,431	10,339	11,639	41,029	49.27%
HEI Research Capital Wales[5]	6,031	2,113	2,557	2,535	2,854	10,059	47.32%
HEI Research Capital N. Ireland[5]	1,778	798	965	957	1,077	3,797	60.57%
TOTAL	*872,621*	*514,000*	*449,000*	*416,000*	*517,000*	*1,896,000*	*59.25%*

[4] This figure reflects a shift from capital to resource.

[5] These funds are allocated on the basis that they will be supplemented by further funding from each of the devolved HE funding bodies.

Note: These figures are indicative for the three years from 2012-13 to 2014-15

Haldane Principle

The Minister for Universities and Science (Mr David Willetts): The Haldane principle means that decisions on individual research proposals are best taken by researchers themselves through peer review. This involves evaluating the quality, excellence and likely impact of science and research programmes. Prioritisation of an individual research council's spending within its allocation is not a decision for Ministers. The coalition Government support this principle as vital for the protection of academic independence and excellence. We all benefit from its application in the UK.

Over the years there has been some uncertainty over the interpretation of the Haldane principle. After consulting senior figures in the science and research community, the Government now offer this further clarification.

This statement on the Haldane principle applies to science and research which the Government funds through the research councils and national academies. HEFCE has statutory independence[1]. The Haldane principle does not apply to the research budgets of Government Departments, which are used to fund research to support their departmental policies and objectives. That said, Departments work closely with the research councils to ensure that the research they fund is aligned with that funded by the science and research base and delivers maximum value to the taxpayer. More generally, research councils need to ensure that the views of those with an interest in the potential outcomes of the research are sought when setting their overall priorities.

The Government do, however, need to take a view on the overall level of funding to science and research and have decided to protect and to ring fence the science and research budget for the next four years. This decision is evidence that the Government recognise the strategic importance of science and research to our future growth, prosperity, culture and heritage.

There are areas where Ministers should have no input: Ministers should not decide which individual projects should be funded nor which researchers should receive the money. This has been crucial to the international success of British science.

At the other end of the spectrum there are decisions that ultimately must be for Ministers, albeit informed by external advice: these include the overall size of the funding for science and research and its distribution between the research councils, the national academies and higher education research funding.

In addition, every Government will have some key national strategic priorities such as addressing the challenges of an ageing population, energy supply or climate change. The research base has an important role to play in addressing such priorities and the research councils, with the support of independent advice, have proposed research programmes to tackle them. It is also appropriate for Ministers to ask research councils to consider how best they can contribute to these priorities, without crowding out other areas of their missions. But it is for the research councils to decide on the specific projects and people to fund within these priorities, free from Ministerial interference.

Similarly, Ministers have a legitimate role in decisions that involve long-term and large scale commitments of national significance. These include the construction of large research facilities, where Ministers have to approve business cases, and involvement in international research treaties. Public funding from the research councils for both these categories of research spending must be dedicated to supporting excellent research, irrespective of its geographical location. In many cases the location will be an obvious decision, given clusters of relevant research capability. Ministerial views on such business cases should be formed with the aid of advice from the research councils.

It is important that Ministers, where they are involved in making strategic decisions on the funding of research, take account of advice from a wide variety of expert sources including academia and industry, both nationally and internationally.

The Government recognise the contribution to our national life and to the UK economy made by research and teaching in the full range of disciplines including physical sciences, social sciences, life sciences, environmental sciences, engineering and the arts and humanities.

The Government value the multiplicity and variety of sources of funding from the public, private and charitable sectors. These contribute to the provision of a rich and diverse environment supporting the research community across all disciplines.

Overall, excellence is and must remain the driver of funding decisions, and it is only by funding excellent research that the maximum benefits will be secured for the nation.

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[1] The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 states that the Secretary of State may not attach terms and conditions on grants to HEFCE which are framed by reference to: particular courses of study, programmes of research, the criteria for the selection and appointment of academic staff or the admission of students.

TREASURY

Economic and Financial Affairs Council

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr George Osborne): The Economic and Financial Affairs Council was held in Brussels on 7 December 2010. The following items were discussed:

Administrative Co-operation Directive

Ministers agreed a Council directive on administrative co-operation in the field of taxation. The directive will improve exchange of information and bring the EU into line with OECD standards, as well as making an important contribution to tackling cross-border tax evasion and avoidance. The UK supports exchange of information where this does not impose disproportionate burdens on business or on tax authorities at a time of fiscal consolidation.

Financial assistance to Ireland

Following an extra Council meeting on 28 November, ECOFIN formally agreed a Council recommendation to Ireland with a view to bringing an end to the situation of an excessive Government deficit. It also agreed a Council decision to grant financial assistance to Ireland according to Council Regulation 407/2010 establishing a European financial stabilisation mechanism. The Government believe that financial assistance to Ireland is in Britain's national interest, helping one of UK's closest economic partners to manage its way through difficult conditions.

Economic governance

Ministers were updated on the progress made on the six Commission legislative proposals on economic governance. Working group discussions have now begun, which are looking at the proposals in detail. Agreement on the final legislation is expected in spring 2011.

Preparation for the European Council on 16 and 17 December 2010

a) Impact of pension reforms on implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP)

ECOFIN discussed a report to the European Council on the impact of pension reforms on implementation of the SGP. The Government believe that the SGP framework should seek to encourage pension reform and long-term sustainability. However, it is important to strike the right balance between encouraging fiscal discipline in the short-term and incentivising systemic reforms to pension systems to boost long-term sustainability. The presidency will submit the report to the European Council.

b) Bank levies

Ministers endorsed a report to the European Council on bank levies, focused on the issue of double taxation. The Government support national levies on banks to complement wider reforms aimed at reducing the probability and impact of banking failures. They believe that the issue of overlapping scope can be resolved through double taxation agreements. The UK and French Governments have agreed on a mechanism that will ensure that there is no double taxation of banking groups subject to both the UK and French bank levies. This demonstrates the Government's commitment to ensuring a level playing field for all banks subject to the UK bank levy. The Government will continue discussions with other international partners where there are also potential cases of double charging.

Public service in the field of healthcare

Council endorsed conclusions on a joint Commission and Economic Policy Committee report on public services in the field of healthcare. The conclusions summarise the main findings of the report and the main challenges facing member states. The main findings include: the need to assess the performance of health systems and implement sound and needed reforms to achieve both a more efficient use of public resources and the provision of high quality healthcare; and the need to get more value for money if countries are to ensure universal access under conditions of severe constraints on public budgets. The conclusions also invite member states and the Commission to factor these findings into their analysis and proposals in the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy.

Crisis management

Ministers endorsed conclusions on a Commission communication on crisis management. The Government welcome the Commission's work in this area to strengthen the European framework and ensure that all member states have common and credible tools and powers to resolve failing banks.

Code of conduct in business taxation

The Council adopted conclusions welcoming the work of the code of conduct group in producing its biannual report under the Belgian presidency. The report highlights potentially harmful tax competition with regards to business taxation. The Council has asked the group to continue its monitoring of business taxation, as well as to carry on the work under the work package agreed by the Council in December 2008. The Commission is also invited to continue discussions with Switzerland and Liechtenstein on the application of the principles and criteria of the code. The UK supports the ongoing work of the group, which is beneficial in highlighting those practices which are potentially damaging to fair EU tax competition.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Fire and Rescue Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Robert Neill): I would like to inform the House about recent developments on the FiReControl project.

This is the third part of the last Government's resilience programme and set out to replace the stand-alone control rooms in England's fire and rescue services with a national network of nine control centres. The aim was to improve national resilience, interoperability and efficiency as well as to enhance the technology available to the fire and rescue service.

Many hon. Members will be aware that, for some time, the project has experienced delays and delivery problems.

The progress of the project has caused serious concern, and so in June this year I made it clear to the main FiReControl contractor, Cassidian (formerly EADS Defence and Security), that the main IT system must now be delivered to time, cost and quality. At this point, we activated a key milestone in their contract requiring the main IT system to be completed in three control centres by mid-2011.

We told Cassidian that no additional taxpayers' money could be invested in this project, nor would delivery of a system of reduced quality or functionality be acceptable.

Following extensive discussion with Cassidian, we have jointly concluded, with regret, that the requirements of the project cannot be delivered to an acceptable time frame. Therefore the best outcome for the taxpayer and the fire and rescue community is for the contract to be terminated with immediate effect. Cassidian and the Department for Communities and Local Government have reached an acceptable settlement over this although the details will remain commercially confidential.

I know many people in the fire and rescue service and in fire and rescue authorities have devoted considerable time and expertise to this project, especially those who have served on governance and working groups, directors of the local authority controlled companies, advisers from the Chief Fire Officers Association, fire and rescue service secondees to the project and other staff involved from the fire and rescue community, and many technical and resilience experts. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all these people for their contribution.

Over the next few weeks we intend to identify the extent to which any legacy assets from the project, including the control centre buildings, can be used for the benefit of the fire and rescue service and local communities in future. We will also be making arrangements for maintaining products already delivered.

The Department will cease funding activities directly associated with the project as quickly as is compatible with organising an orderly closing down of the project. We recognise that fire and rescue authorities will now wish to review their control arrangements in the light of today's decision. This Government do not intend to impose any solution for the future of control room services.

We will, however, start to consult the fire and rescue sector soon on how best the Government can support them, if at all, in developing their alternative plans based on the principles of localism, ensuring public safety, building up national resilience and delivering value for taxpayers' money. These continue to be our overriding priorities.

I know that the uncertainty around the future of this project has been frustrating and unsettling for the fire and rescue community and those closely concerned with their interests. My objective has been to deliver operational certainty for the fire and rescue service and financial certainty for the taxpayer. Today's decision will deliver that objective and I will continue to keep the House informed of progress.

Major Infrastructure Planning Reform

The Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Greg Clark): I am today publishing the Department's work plan on major infrastructure planning reform. This Government believe that securing investment in new infrastructure is essential to deliver sustainable growth over the coming decades and is an integral part of our efforts to rebuild the UK economy and provide new jobs. We cannot expect to meet the needs of tomorrow with yesterday's infrastructure and we cannot secure essential investment without a planning system designed to meet this need. The work plan sets out the steps that we are taking to deliver this reform.

It is right that decisions on infrastructure of national importance should be taken by democratically elected representatives and not by an unelected quango. The Localism Bill therefore provides a legislative framework for the abolition of the infrastructure planning commission (IPC) and the creation of a major infrastructure planning unit (MIPU) in a new, more streamlined and efficient planning inspectorate. The MIPU will be responsible for examining applications for major infrastructure development and providing high quality advice to Ministers.

For the majority of schemes, decisions will be taken by the Secretary of State responsible for the policy: the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change will take decisions on major energy infrastructure and the Secretary of State for Transport will take decisions on major transport infrastructure.

We envisage that applications relating to hazardous waste will be determined by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and that applications relating to waste water and water supply will be determined jointly by the Secretaries of State for Communities and Local Government and for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. This is in line with the position prior to the establishment of the IPC.

The Government are determined to ensure that a return to ministerial decision-making does not mean a return to slow and protracted consideration of applications. It supports the fast-track approach established through the 2008 Planning Act, that is to say that decisions will be taken within 12 months of commencement of an application's examination. We will set up a ministerial group to oversee the effectiveness of the regime and explore whether additional efficiencies can be made to speed up the process further.

The work plan confirms the Government's intention to press ahead with the development of national policy statements and indicates a timetable for their production and designation. The Government have made clear their position on additional runways at London's three major airports and their priority is to create a sustainable framework for UK aviation rather than to produce a national policy statement at this time.

National policy statements should have the strongest possible democratic mandate and subject to the passage of the Localism Bill, they will in future be subject to approval of the House of Commons following parliamentary scrutiny by the House of Commons, the House of Lords or a Joint Committee of both Houses. For those national policy statements which are currently subject to public consultation and parliamentary scrutiny, it is the Government's intention to adopt a similar, informal approach for parliamentary approval to that set out in the Localism Bill.

National policy statements will continue to be the primary documents by which decisions are made on schemes which fall within the 2008 Planning Act regime for major infrastructure. Decisions must be made in accordance with them, although the Secretary of State will also have to take into account any other matters considered both important and relevant to the decision. Those matters can include policy contained within the new national planning policy framework on which I have made a separate statement to the House today.

A copy of the work plan has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and is available at: http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/mipworkplan

National Planning Policy Framework

The Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Greg Clark): The coalition agreement states that the Government will publish and present to Parliament a simple and consolidated national planning framework that covers all forms of development and sets out national economic, environmental and social priorities.

The planning system is vital to the re-building of Britain's economy. We need to reinvigorate our construction and development industries and the investment that goes with them and to ensure that we develop and protect our national assets. We need a planning system which encourages the idea that development can positively benefit a community. We need a planning system that enables local people to shape their surroundings in a way that, while heeding national objectives and constraints, is also sensitive to the history and character of a given location. We need participation and social engagement enabling communities to formulate a positive vision of their future development.

The Localism Bill sets out a legislative framework for achieving these goals.

The Government have made it clear that with the exception of nationally important projects, planning should be a local matter. The role of central Government is to determine and define environmental, economic and social priorities for the country and design a planning system which helps ensure a pattern of development that matches these priorities and local aspiration. This role is currently fulfilled through legislation, and through the suite of planning policy guidance notes (PPGs) and minerals policy guidance notes (MPGs), and more recently planning policy statements (PPSs) and minerals policy statements (MPSs).

These documents, which run to over 1,000 pages, set out central Government policy on various aspects of development and land use to local planning authorities, who must legally have regard to them when drawing up their local development frameworks. They are also often relevant to making decisions on planning applications. They cover broad policy themes such as planning aspects of climate change, housing, renewable energy, flood risk, green belt and waste, and also procedural themes such as how to compile local development plans.

The Government believe that the current suite of planning policy statements and guidance notes is too centralist in its approach, and too long and cumbersome for councils and developers to use effectively. There is no over-arching integrated statement of the Government's priorities for the country and the role which planning can play in delivering them.

Therefore the Government will produce a simple national planning policy framework setting out their priorities for the planning system in England in a single, concise document covering all major forms of development proposals handled by local authorities. All the national planning policies set out in PPSs, MPSs, PPGs and MPGs, will be integrated into a single document.

The national planning policy framework will set out the Government's views on how the planning system in England can contribute to the delivery of a prosperous, competitive and attractive country based on the values of freedom, fairness and responsibility. The framework will set broad economic, environmental and social priorities and how they relate to each other, but will ensure that the majority of planning decisions are made at the local level, with the minimum of interference from Whitehall. The framework will also set out a strong basis for economic growth, a presumption in favour of sustainable development, as well as any further policy needed to establish and implement neighbourhood plans.

The Government will apply the following principles when considering what the framework should contain. The framework will be:

localist in its approach, handing power back to local communities to decide what is right for them;

used as a mechanism for delivering Government objectives only where it is relevant, proportionate and effective to do so; and

user-friendly and accessible, providing clear policies on making robust local and neighbourhood plans and development management decisions.

In the past, Governments have issued vast swathes of non-statutory guidance in addition to policy. However, such guidance can unintentionally take on a force which constrains rather than helps practitioners and users on the ground. This Government, therefore, believe that we should keep central Government guidance to a minimum. Accordingly, the Government will radically reduce the amount of guidance they issue and will work to withdraw or shorten existing guidance wherever they can.

The Government will publish and consult on a draft of the new national planning policy framework in 2011. We will invite Parliament to hold a Select Committee inquiry on the framework during the consultation period, so that it is subjected to additional democratic scrutiny.

For the time being national policy statements (which are separate statutory documents published in accordance with the Planning Act 2008, setting out the Government's policy on major infrastructure projects such as nuclear power stations and ports) will not be included in the framework. Further detail on our approach to major infrastructure is set out in the work plan on major infrastructure planning reform which I am also publishing today. Copies of the work plan have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and are available on the Department's website:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicyframework

This Government have a commitment to greater transparency and openness in developing their policy. To begin the process of writing the framework, therefore, and in advance of formal consultation on a draft, I invite organisations and individuals to offer their suggestions to the Department on what priorities and policies we might adopt to produce a shorter, more decentralised and less bureaucratic national planning policy framework. Details of how to do so have been placed on the Department for Communities and Local Government website. I would be pleased to receive proposals by 28 February 2011. The Department will also organise a number of roundtable discussions with key organisations to promote debate on the framework.

Zero-Carbon Buildings

The Minister for Housing and Local Government (Grant Shapps): This Government are committed to ensuring that new build homes post-2016 do not add extra carbon dioxide emissions to the atmosphere while ensuring that the costs of building new homes do not prevent appropriate and sustainable development.

We have confirmed that the national regulatory requirements will include a high level of energy efficiency, which has been incorporated into a revised code for sustainable homes, to encourage practical experience. In July, we asked the Zero-Carbon Hub to advise on the national benchmark standard for on-site measures. I have now received the Hub's initial findings; I am grateful for the work of the Hub with developers, green groups and other partners on this study. This is an important piece of work which will help us shape final decisions on the regulatory thresholds. We will also need to take account of decisions on the renewable heat incentive and the Climate Change Committee's recent advice on grid decarbonisation. We will announce our conclusions next year.

Localities can already plan for zero-carbon development today, using powers in the Planning and Energy Act 2008, where it is reasonable to do so and is consistent with national planning policy, including relevant requirements on feasibility and viability, and relevant regulation. Many local authorities are already demonstrating their desire to drive performance in this area.

Many interested parties have argued for a community energy fund, enabling zero-carbon to be met partly through contributions to a fund used to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, allowing developers to meet their carbon obligations cost-effectively. In this respect, the recently confirmed community infrastructure levy provides a mechanism for local authorities to achieve reductions in carbon dioxide emissions locally, through investment in local renewable energy infrastructure that supports development in their area. It will be important that any approach operates in a way that demonstrates transparently that real carbon savings are achieved. We will now work with local authorities and industry on how best to do that.

It will be important that people are able to take the best decision for their area. We recently launched community energy online to support local authorities and others who want to introduce local energy schemes. We will also work to incorporate material on local energy planning into a local standards framework, providing accessible, robust options to underpin local choice.

New homes are an important part of new development, but not the whole picture.

I can announce that we will follow a similar process for new non-domestic buildings as for new homes. The Government's policy is progressively to raise the national regulatory requirements for non-domestic buildings between now and 2019, enabling them to be zero carbon from 2019. We will maintain consistency between the domestic and non-domestic frameworks as far as it is practical, but will consider taking a different approach on some elements, where the diversity of the non-domestic stock or the nature of the commercial market justifies that. We are today publishing on the Department's website the findings of the consultation exercise on policy options for zero-carbon new non-domestic buildings that was concluded earlier this year.

We are currently undertaking detailed technical work to underpin the development of future national regulatory standards. We expect also that off-site measures could be supported using the same approaches as for homes, and will investigate this possibility further so it will be open for local areas to use a community energy fund through the community infrastructure levy to achieve the zero-carbon standard for non-domestic buildings should they wish to do so.

In future our homes—indeed, all our buildings—will need to be cleaner, greener and cheaper to run. This Government will continue to deliver the tools to make this a reality.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Radio and Television Transmission (Irish Language)

The Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (Mr Jeremy Hunt): In the Belfast (Good Friday) agreement in April 1998, the UK Government undertook to explore the scope for achieving more widespread availability of the Irish language television station, Teilifis na Gaeilige (TG4) in Northern Ireland. The UK Government fulfilled this commitment by the construction of a new transmitter at Divis. This, combined with the analogue overspill signal from transmitters in Ireland, means that TG4 is currently available, on a free-to-air basis to approximately 60% of the population in Northern Ireland.

Once the analogue signals in Northern Ireland and Ireland are switched off by the end of 2012, arrangements need to be put in place to enable TG4 to be received in a digital form. In this context, a memorandum of understanding was signed by the Irish and UK Governments in February 2010, committing them to working together on the technical arrangements for post-switchover provision of TG4.

The two Governments are pleased with the amount of progress made since the signing of the MOU in ensuring and expanding the provision of Irish television services, including Irish language services, in Northern Ireland.

Following a broad range of technical work, the two Governments have now agreed that the most effective way to provide for the continuing provision of TG4 is by building a new, low power TV multiplex in Northern Ireland. In addition to carrying TG4, this multiplex, which will be part of the UK DTT system, will also carry RTÉ 1 and RTÉ 2.

It is hoped that this will further increase the coverage of these channels in Northern Ireland, enabling approximately 90% of the population in Northern Ireland to receive their services on a free-to-air basis, either through overspill as before or via the new multiplex.

The existing analogue signals will be switched off on a co-ordinated basis in Ireland and Northern Ireland at the end of 2012 and much more work needs to be done between then and now. Digital UK, the not-for-profit organisation that is leading the digital switchover in the UK, will be ensuring that viewers in Northern Ireland have all the necessary information to help them make the switch to digital and know what sort of equipment to buy if they want to receive these services.

Other arrangements that need to be put in place include the establishment of a joint venture between RTÉ and TG4 to run the multiplex which will be licensed under the UK's Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006 by Ofcom at the request of the UK Government. This will be a not-for-profit company. In addition, the licensee will have to put out to competitive tender all the elements of the multiplex operation which are contestable and the multiplex will be operated on a not-for-profit and open book basis.

Olympic and Paralympic Games (Legacy)

The Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (Mr Jeremy Hunt): This statement is to set out the Government's priorities for the legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games. Further detail of the Government's plans is provided in the Government's legacy plan "Plans for the Legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games", copies of which will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses today.

In the coalition agreement we committed ourselves to producing a safe and secure games that leave a lasting legacy. Our task is not only to ensure that the games are a success as iconic sporting occasions but also that we make the most of the games for the nation. We, as Government, will focus on four areas in doing this:

> Harnessing the United Kingdom's passion for sport to increase school-based and grass-roots participation in competitive sport—and to encourage the whole population to be more physically active;
>
> Exploiting to the full the opportunities for economic growth offered by hosting the games, particularly with reference to inward investment and tourism;
>
> Promoting community engagement and participation in voluntary work across all groups in society through the games; and
>
> Ensuring that the Olympic park can be developed after the games as one of the principal drivers of regeneration in east London, with particular focus on the digital and creative industries.

This is a statement on behalf of the UK Government. However the games' legacy is being driven across the UK and beyond by a rich variety of organisations, communities and individuals, including: the London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) and the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA); the British Olympic Association (BOA) and British Paralympic Association (BPA); Sport England and UK Sport; the Mayor of London, the Olympic Park Legacy Company and the host boroughs (Barking and Dagenham, Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest); the Nations and Regions Group established by Government and LOCOG to achieve maximum benefits from the games and their legacy across the UK; devolved Administrations in the nations and a large number of other local authorities across the UK; the games' sponsors and other businesses; and many third sector organisations operating at national and local levels. A small number of examples of the great work already going on across the country are included in the Government's legacy plan, but there are many hundreds of others.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

The Secretary of State for Defence (Dr Liam Fox): Following a request by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command in Afghanistan a Company Group, formed around elements of the 2nd Battalion The Royal Welsh, from Task Force Helmand and partnered by a company from the Afghan national army, will temporarily extend their current Freedom of Movement task along Highway One. The area of operations will extend east into Kandahar province, adjacent to Helmand, for a specific time-limited period of up to six months.

The objective of the task is to secure "Freedom of Movement" along a key part of Highway One, between central Helmand and Kandahar. This will enable ISAF and the Afghan national security forces to increase security in both Helmand and Kandahar provinces. It will further benefit security, stability and economic development in Helmand by reducing the influence of the insurgency on the free flow of traffic on Highway One. Improving security on the route will ensure that it is freely usable by the Afghan authorities, commercial users and the local population.

"Equipment, Support and Technology for UK Defence and Security: A Consultation Paper"

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Peter Luff): I am pleased to lay in Parliament a Green Paper entitled "Equipment, Support and Technology for UK Defence and Security: A Consultation Paper".

The first duty of Government is the security of our nation. It is therefore essential that the UK equips itself with the right tools to tackle current and future threats. The convergence of defence and security that underpinned the strategic defence and security review means that we should seek to bring together our approach to equipment, support, and technology in both the defence and security sectors. I have therefore worked with the Minister for Security in preparing this Green Paper to reflect our new approach. We have also included cyber security as a separate section because it is a new and fundamental challenge.

Our default position is to use open competition in the global market; to buy off-the-shelf where we can; and to promote open markets in defence and security capabilities. We will take action to protect our operational advantages and freedom of action, but only where essential for national security.

The UK currently enjoys a strong industrial presence in the defence and security markets and export success abroad in those markets; last year, defence and security exports achieved around £8.5 billion revenue. We are committed to doing more to promote exports of both defence and security products from the UK to responsible nations, as well as to boost the role of small and medium-sized enterprises, both in their direct and indirect supplies to the Government and their agencies.

The Green Paper is available online at http://defenceconsultations.org.uk/. The formal public consultation period will run from January to March 2011. We would encourage all interested parties to contribute to the debate. The Government plan to publish a White Paper on these issues in 2011.

Community Veterans Mental Health Pilots

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Andrew Robathan): The Government are committed to providing effective, through-life, health services for our service and ex-service personnel.

As part of this commitment, the Department of Health and devolved Administrations, with support from the Ministry of Defence, have piloted a new mental health care service for former members of the armed forces in six national health service trusts across the UK. The final pilot, in Scotland, is due to be completed in April 2011.

Independent evaluation of the pilots by the University of Sheffield Centre for Psychological Services Research, which my Department commissioned, has been completed. I am announcing today the publication of their independent evaluation report.

The report identifies key components of successful services and makes a number of recommendations. The Department of Health will consider the report and examine how its recommendations fit with existing and planned enhancements to NHS veterans mental health services, including those recommended by the my hon. Friend the Member for South West Wiltshire (Dr Murrison).

A copy of the report will be placed in the Library of the House and also on the websites of the University of Sheffield and the Ministry of Defence.

CABINET OFFICE

Voting Entitlement

The Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office (Mr Mark Harper): A bar on sentenced, serving prisoners voting was first put in place in 1870. Successive Governments have maintained the position that, when an individual breaks their contract with society by committing an offence that leads to imprisonment, they should lose the right to vote while they are incarcerated.

Five years ago, in a case known as Hirst (No.2), the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the existing statutory bar on convicted prisoners voting was contrary to article 3, protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights—the right to free and fair elections.

The Court ruled that barring convicted prisoners in detention pursued a legitimate aim, but that a blanket ban was not proportionate. In its judgment, the Court acknowledged that the right to vote under the first protocol was not absolute, and that contracting states to the European Convention had to be given a margin of appreciation—a broad discretion—to decide what limitations on that right would be proportionate.

That judgment was handed down in October 2005. The last Government stated clearly and repeatedly that they would implement the judgment, published a timetable for legislation, and issued two consultation papers about how to do so. But they did nothing. The result is that the United Kingdom stands in breach of international law obligations—obligations that we expect others to uphold—and prisoners are bringing compensation claims as a direct result of the last Government's inaction.

In November 2010, the European Court of Human Rights handed down a further judgment against the UK, Greens and MT. In that judgment, the Court set a deadline for the introduction of legislation of August 2011. There are in the region of 2,500 claims before the European Court of Human Rights which have been suspended pending implementation. We have been given a window to act and it is right that we do so. If we do not, we only increase the risk of damages.

It is plain that there are strong views across Parliament and in the country on the question of whether convicted prisoners should be entitled to vote. However, this is not a choice: it is a legal obligation. So the Government are announcing today that we will act to implement the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights. In deciding how to proceed, we have been guided by three principles. First, that we should implement the Hirst judgment in a way that meets our legal obligations, but does not go further than that. Secondly, that the most serious offenders will not be given the right to vote. Thirdly, that we should seek to prevent the taxpayer having to face future claims for compensation.

The Government will therefore bring forward legislation providing that the blanket ban in the existing law will be replaced. Offenders sentenced to a custodial sentence of four years or more will lose the right to vote in all circumstances, which reflects the Government's clear view that more serious offenders should not retain the right to vote. Offenders sentenced to a custodial sentence of less than four years will retain the right to vote, but legislation will provide that the sentencing judge will be able to remove that right if they consider that appropriate. Four years has in the past been regarded as the distinction between short and long-term prisoners, and the Government consider that permitting prisoners sentenced to less than four years' imprisonment to vote is sufficient to comply with the judgment.

The right to vote will be restricted to UK Westminster Parliamentary and European Parliament elections only, and not in other elections or referendums. That is the minimum currently required by the law (a case considering whether article 3, protocol 1 applies to elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly is currently before the European Court of Human Rights: the Government's position is that they do not). Prisoners will vote by post or proxy, and will be entitled to register to vote not at the prison, but at their former address or the area where they have a local connection.

We believe that these proposals can meet the objectives that we have set out of implementing the judgment in a way that is proportionate: ensuring the most serious offenders will not be given the right to vote: and seeking to prevent future claims for compensation. We will bring forward legislation next year for Parliament to debate.

While the franchise is reserved to Westminster, the implementation of this policy will clearly have implications for Scotland and Northern Ireland, where the administration of justice is devolved. The Government will work closely with colleagues in the Scottish and Northern Ireland Administrations before legislation is introduced on the practical implications of the approach.

Governments have an absolute duty to uphold the rule of law. And at this of all times we must avoid risking taxpayers' money in ways that the public would rightly condemn. In the light of this, and of the legacy left by the last Government, the only responsible course is to implement the judgment, and to do so in a way which ensures the most serious offenders continue to lose the right to vote.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Domestic Heating Oil Supplies

The Minister of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change (Charles Hendry): Many households across the UK without access to the natural gas grid rely on deliveries of heating oil to heat their homes. Heating oil is also used by smaller commercial customers, notably, with demand focused in the agricultural sector.

Overall, UK heating oil demand is around 3.7 million tonnes per year with domestic demand accounting for some 60%. Demand is seasonal with around two thirds of heating oil consumed between October and March.

The recent severe weather has significantly disrupted the distribution of heating oil to customers across the UK, particularly, but not only, in Scotland. The severe weather—notably low temperatures and heavy snow—has caused considerable disruption to road networks which has affected suppliers' ability to make deliveries particularly to more remote areas away from the strategic road network. This has resulted in delivery backlogs which suppliers have been working hard, in difficult circumstances, to reduce.

There are around 200 fuel distributors in the UK who work hard throughout the year to supply their customers. Many of these companies are small businesses, some with perhaps only two or three delivery vehicles. A tanker will make an average of 16 domestic deliveries per day covering some 180 miles to make these deliveries. The bulk of the time in making a delivery is taken up by the travel between the vehicle's base and the customer and between customers. Some larger suppliers hold their own stocks at smaller depots but others pick up from fuel terminals "off rack" purchasing product on the spot market. Modern road tankers deliver fuel to the customer's storage tank via a dedicated fuel delivery system.

Tackling this backlog is challenging for the industry at a time when, due to the cold weather, they have been facing significantly higher demand than is usual at this time of year. This challenge has been exacerbated by delays to deliveries due to the state of road network in parts of the UK, and customers bringing forward deliveries that would usually have been made in the new year. However, prompt action to relax regulations on drivers' hours has enabled drivers to work for longer each day, making more deliveries and helping to manage the backlog.

Distributors are doing all they can to prioritise deliveries to vulnerable customers and those running short on fuel. Working with DECC, the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers has issued a voluntary code of practice to its members to help them prioritise orders to those most in need. We are also putting in place arrangements with distributors through the relevant trade associations, the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers and UK Liquid Petroleum Gas, for distributors to alert local authorities when they are aware of a risk that potentially vulnerable households will run short of heating oil. Similarly we have asked local authorities, and other local responders to be aware of these risks and, taking account of local circumstances, to consider what assistance they can provide to potentially vulnerable households who may need support over the Christmas and new year period.

Hospitals do not tend to use heating oil, although a reducing number of NHS organisations are reliant on gas oil for stand-by use, fuel for generators, for boiler maintenance or dual fuel needs. Hospitals normally operate with higher levels of fuel reserves at this time of year, and, at present, we understand that there are no reported problems owing to a lack of gas oil deliveries to NHS trusts.

The severe weather has also led to a very high forecast of demand for gas today. Last night this led National Grid to issue a day-ahead Gas Balancing Alert for Monday 20 December at 6.28 pm. The GBA trigger level for today (20 December) is set at 452.40 million cubic metres. National Grid currently expect demand for the day will be 461.57 million cubic metres (though it should be noted this figure is constantly updated). This figure is 97 million cubic metres above the normal seasonal demand (more than 26%). The expected demand being higher than the trigger level obliged National Grid to issue the GBA.

The Gas Balancing Alert (GBA) is a tool that National Grid uses to make sure there is enough gas in the system. The GBA has the effect of signalling:

> to shippers to increase supplies on to the network, for example, by increasing flows through imports and releasing gas from storage; and,
>
> to large users, including power stations, that they should reduce demand for gas (for example, in the case of power portfolio generators, to switch to alternative sources such as coal.)

As such GBAs are simply a part of the portfolio of mechanisms which help the market to operate effectively. When each of the GBAs were issued last winter the market responded well, closing any potential gap between supply and demand by bringing on additional supplies and reducing demand from large users. There is currently no expectation of any disruption to domestic customers or commercial customers unless they have interruptible contracts in place. That said, we are never complacent about security of supply and National Grid continues to keep us informed as the situation develops and we are making changes through the Energy Bill to improve further the security of gas supply, by conferring powers on Ofgem to sharpen commercial incentives for the effective management of low-probability, high-impact events.

The issuance of a Gas Balancing Alert by National Grid today is also a reminder of the significant efforts being made by system and network operators, shippers, suppliers, storage operators and other participants in the gas market to deliver sufficient gas to meet the heightened demand brought on by the current severe weather.

HEALTH

Adult Autism

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Paul Burstow): I am announcing today the Government's publication of "Implementing Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives", guidance for local authorities and NHS organisations to secure implementation of the autism strategy. I launched this guidance at a conference convened by the National Autistic Society on 17 December 2010. A copy of the guidance has been placed in the Library. Copies are available to hon. Members from the Vote Office and to noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office.

This statutory guidance has been published in fulfilment of the requirements in the Autism Act 2009 that the Secretary of State publish a strategy on services for adults with autism in England by 1 April 2010, and issue statutory guidance no later than 31 December 2010.

The strategy "Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives" was published on 3 March 2010. This Government have made a very clear and firm commitment to drive forward work to tackle the disadvantage which people with autism and their families sadly so often face, and to step up the pace to deliver that strategy.

The purpose of this guidance is to secure the implementation of the Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives strategy. It gives guidance to local authorities, NHS bodies and NHS foundation trusts on issues set out in the Autism Act. This guidance will help these bodies to develop services that support and meet the locally identified needs of people with autism and their families and carers and enable local transparency and accountability.

As set out in section 3 of the Autism Act, this guidance is to be treated as though it were guidance issued under section 7 of the Local Authority Social Service Act 1970 (LASS Act). This means that local authorities must

> "follow the path charted by the guidance, with liberty to deviate from it where the authority judges on admissible grounds that there is good reason to do so, but without freedom to take a substantially different course."

Though the LASS Act does not directly apply to NHS bodies, the Autism Act makes clear that for the purposes of this guidance

> "an NHS body is to be treated as if it were a local authority within the meaning of the LASS Act".

The guidance focuses on the key areas required by the Act, in each case identifying what health and social services bodies are already expected to do, and setting out any additional requirements introduced by the strategy. An underlying principle is to avoid new burdens.

This guidance has been informed by an extensive consultation on draft guidance between July and October this year.

The Secretary of State has a duty, under the Autism Act, to keep the strategy under review: as part of this, the guidance will also remain under review and will be updated as required.

Transparency in Outcomes

The Secretary of State for Health (Mr Andrew Lansley): Today marks the beginning of an important shift in focus for the NHS and public health, away from focusing on politically motivated process targets, and towards what matters most: improving quality and delivering health outcomes that are among the best in the world.

I am publishing the first NHS outcomes framework, "The NHS Outcomes Framework 2011-12", which will serve three purposes:

> provide a national level overview of how well the NHS is progressing, so far as possible with international comparisons;
>
> provide an accountability mechanism between the Secretary of State for Health and the NHS Commissioning Board; and
>
> act as a catalyst for driving quality improvement and outcome measurement throughout the NHS by encouraging a change in culture and behaviour, including a renewed focus on tackling inequalities in outcomes.

This framework has been developed building on the proposals set out for consultation in "Transparency in outcomes—a framework for the NHS", published in July, and the nearly 800 responses to the consultation.

This first NHS outcomes framework looks only to set the direction of travel for the NHS, and will not be used in this coming year for accountability purposes. No levels of ambition are attached to the indicators. For 2011-12, the business, finance and performance rules are set out in "The NHS Operating Framework for England 2011-12". The NHS outcomes framework will be refined annually, and the next iteration, for 2012-13 will be published in 2011, and will be used to hold the proposed NHS Commissioning Board to account once it takes its statutory place (subject to parliamentary approval).

Alongside the NHS outcomes framework, I am publishing a formal Government response to the consultation "Transparency in outcomes—a framework for the NHS", an impact assessment and equality impact assessment for the first framework and technical detail on the indicators presented in the framework.

Today I am also publishing "Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Transparency in Outcomes—Proposals for a Public Health Outcomes Framework", which seeks views on a new strategic outcomes framework for public health at national and local levels. This document was proposed in the recent public health White Paper.

This consultation is an opportunity to collect the views of public health professionals, NHS commissioners, local authorities, service providers, particularly the voluntary and independent sector, and all other interested parties. The consultation will close at the end of March 2011.

Both outcomes frameworks have been designed so that where joint working and alignment is essential to improving outcomes, the NHS and Public Health England are held to account for working together.

All documents have been placed in the Library. Copies are available to hon. Members from the Vote Office and to noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office.

Work Force Education and Training Consultations

The Secretary of State for Health (Mr Andrew Lansley): Today I am publishing a consultation document seeking views on proposals set out in the White Paper, "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS" (Cm7881). We are consulting on proposals to create a new framework for education and training of the health care work force. Under these proposals, health care providers will be given responsibility for planning and developing the work force, while the quality of education and training will remain under the stewardship of the health care professions.

"Liberating the NHS: Developing the Healthcare Workforce" has been placed in the Library. Copies are available to hon. Members in the Vote Office and to noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office. The consultation is also available at www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_122590.

"Liberating the NHS: Developing the Healthcare Workforce" further develops the education and training commitments in the White Paper that:

> Health care employers and their staff will agree plans and funding for work force development and training;
>
> education and commissioning will be led locally and nationally by the health care professions; working with employers;
>
> the professions will have a leading role in deciding the structure and content of training and quality standards;
>
> all providers of health care services will pay to meet the costs of education and training with transparent funding flows supporting the level playing field between providers;
>
> the NHS Commissioning Board will provide national patient and public oversight of health care providers' funding plans for training and education, checking that these reflect its strategic commissioning intentions. GP consortia will provide this oversight at local level; and
>
> the Centre for Workforce Intelligence will act as a consistent source of information and analysis, informing and informed by all levels of the system.

This consultation is an opportunity to seek the views of health care providers, health care professionals and the wider public to inform the development of a new framework for education and training and developing the health care work force.

The consultation period will close on 31 March 2011.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Passenger Name Record Agreements

The Minister for Immigration (Damian Green): The coalition Government are firmly committed to protecting the security of their citizens and to restoring and protecting civil liberties.

The UK, in common with many other EU member states and third countries, places considerable value on the collection and analysis of passenger name record (PNR) data (those data collected by carriers in the exercise of their business) for the purposes of combating terrorism and organised crime. The appropriate use of PNR data is vital in keeping the public safe.

In line with this view the Government continue to press for an EU PNR directive that includes provision for intra-EU flights. The Government also believe that clear PNR agreements between the EU and third countries play a vital role in removing legal uncertainty for air carriers flying to those countries, and help ensure that PNR information can be shared quickly and securely with all necessary data protection safeguards in place where appropriate.

We are firmly committed to consistency in our approach to civil liberties and will seek to translate our domestic agenda to the EU level—purpose limitation; rigorous evidence-based arguments; the principles of necessity and proportionality; stringent data protection safeguards, especially when handling sensitive personal data; independent data protection oversight; and, of course, full compliance with EU law and the EU treaties.

On 21 September the European Commission (EC) published a communication on the global approach to transfers of passenger name record (PNR) data to third countries (which proposed a set of common principles on sharing data with third countries) alongside a package of draft negotiating mandates for PNR agreements with Australia, Canada and the United States. In response to the Commission recommendations, on 18 October the Council presented a draft Council decision to authorise the Commission to open negotiations for PNR agreements with Australia, Canada and the US together with draft negotiating guidelines (collectively referred to as negotiating mandates).

We fully recognise the importance of working with partners outside the EU, given that the threats we face are global in nature. Notably, we will continue to engage closely with the US on PNR and data protection; both of which are crucial to our ability to co-operate with the US on improving US and EU security. We will though ensure that the exchange of data with such partners remains subject to rigorous data protection safeguards.

After due consideration of the importance of civil liberties, data protection and security concerns, the Government have decided to opt in to negotiating mandates for three PNR agreements with Australia, Canada and the US as they believe they will pave the way for EU-third country agreements that strike the right balance between civil liberties, data protection and security of the EU. As these mandates are currently restricted so as to preserve the EU negotiating position they are not therefore depositable within Parliament.

The Government will continue to work with the Scrutiny Committees when it considers whether to opt in to Council decisions to sign and conclude each third country agreement. I will also in due course update Parliament on the Government's opt-in decisions at these later stages.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Parades Commission for Northern Ireland

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr Owen Paterson): I am pleased to announce the appointment of a new Parades Commission for Northern Ireland. I have appointed Peter Osborne as chair and Douglas Bain, Delia Close, Brian Kennaway, Catriona King, Frances Nolan, and Robin Percival as members. They will all take up office on 1 January 2011.

The Parades Commission plays a vital role in ensuring that there is a means of dealing with contentious parades which allows for consideration of the rights of those who parade and those who are affected by parading.

I am confident that the new Commission brings a wealth of knowledge, skills and understanding, helping the Commission to meet the challenges ahead and build on its considerable achievements over the last 12 years.

TRANSPORT

Motorcycle Testing

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mike Penning): I am today publishing an interim report on the review of motorcycle testing in Great Britain, which I launched on 8 June 2010. Last week I met the working group established to conduct the review and we agreed a set of high-level findings and next steps. This group included members of the motorcycle industry, trainers, riders' representatives, road safety and local authority bodies as well as DSA and DFT officials. I will be placing the report on the Department's website www,dft.gov.uk and in the Libraries of both Houses.

While there is more work to be done on the detail, the review has helpfully identified a set of changes to the test which have the potential to deliver my objectives for a new motorcycle test. My goal is to see the practical test delivered as a single on-road event in a way which will maintain riding standards, protect safety and increase accessibility of the test to all candidates. The work delivered by the group includes a new hazard avoidance manoeuvre which—subject to further trialling—can be carried out on the road, as well as ways to perform the other specified manoeuvres on the road. The working group has also suggested that the slow manoeuvres (manual handling, slalom, figure-of-eight, U-turn and slow ride) might better be examined at training centres, ahead of the main test, by delegated examiners employed by the training industry. It could be followed by a single event on road test conducted by DSA, including the remaining manoeuvres and the other elements of the road-based test. This approach needs further development with the training industry.

The next step for the review will be to hold wider trials, with test-level candidates, to verify the standards, suitability and safety of the new manoeuvres, including a number of on-road sites, to establish the criteria for safe on-road testing. This will be followed by public consultation on the proposed changes. We will aim to implement a new test by the end of 2011 or early 2012, including on-road testing initially in priority areas which are poorly served by the current network of off-road test centres. Any changes to the manoeuvres would be implemented for all tests at all locations. Subject to further work on safety, cost and value for money, there would be a phased introduction of on-road testing moving to general adoption as soon as possible. Changes to the test will need to be monitored and kept under review to ensure that the review objectives are delivered in practice.

I am grateful to the members of this group for their work and note that many of them have given up their own time to contribute to the review.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 21 December 2010

TREASURY

Consumer Credit Regulation

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr Mark Hoban): Today the Government have published a consultation document on transferring consumer credit regulation from the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to the new Consumer Protection and Markets Authority (CPMA). The Government announced the creation of the CPMA as part of their wider reform of the financial regulatory architecture in July, and committed to consult on the merits of transferring responsibility for consumer credit regulation to this new body.

The consultation document sets out the Government's proposed approach of bringing the regulation of consumer credit into line with that of financial services generally. This proposal is part of the Government's wider programme to reform financial regulation, to improve consumer protection and strengthen financial stability.

Copies of the consultation document have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses, and are available on the websites of HM Treasury and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Infrastructure Cost Review

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Danny Alexander): The Government have today published the report of an investigation into how to reduce the costs of delivery of civil engineering works for major infrastructure projects.

The report identifies a number of drivers for the higher cost of construction in the UK compared to other EU countries and supports the view that higher costs for UK infrastructure are mainly generated in the early project formulation and pre-construction phases. Efficiency improvements could lower the costs of delivery and realise potential benefits of £2 billion to 3 billion per annum. A number of specific areas where the Government are considering taking action to deliver these benefits have been identified. A prioritised work programme for implementation will be finalised and announced around the time of Budget 2011.

Copies of the document have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses and are available on the Treasury website at: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk.

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Service Compensation Scheme

The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Mr Francis Maude): I am laying before Parliament today the Civil Service Compensation Scheme (Amendment No.2) Scheme 2010 and the associated revisions to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme.

The new scheme will replace the old scheme which the previous Government tried to reform in February 2010. I first announced that the coalition Government intended to reform the civil service compensation scheme on 6 July 2010, following which the Superannuation Bill was introduced to Parliament on 15 July to ensure that reform of the scheme could not be vetoed by any one of the unions. Extensive discussions then took place between officials and Ministers and the civil service trade unions. Proposals were put to the Council of Civil Service Unions on 24 September. In the event, the council did not accept those proposals, but five of the unions — Prospect, the FDA, the Prison Officers' Association (POA), the GMB and Unite — approached the Government directly and asked to continue discussions on those terms. There followed an intensive period of meetings between the five unions and officials, which on 5 October resulted in an agreement being reached between the negotiators on terms that might form the basis of a new compensation scheme. The five unions wrote to confirm that these terms had accurately recorded an agreement, that all their negotiating teams were able to recommend positively to their executives, as being the best that might be achieved in negotiation.

Subsequently, the POA's executive committee voted to distance itself from that agreement and to request further discussion. The sixth union, the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) Union, had decided not to take part in the talks at the point when the five other unions had agreed to negotiate separately with the Government.

The Superannuation Act 2010, which received Royal Assent on 16 December, amended the Superannuation Act 1972 so as to remove the requirement for agreement of the civil service unions to any changes that could reduce the benefits of the compensation scheme. However, during the passage through Parliament of the Superannuation Bill, the Government agreed a number of changes to it, including a further amendment to the Superannuation Act 1972 so as to introduce a clear requirement that future consultation on any changes that would reduce the value of the civil service compensation scheme must be undertaken

"with a view to reaching agreement"

and that a report is made to Parliament setting out the details of the consultation that has been carried out with the unions.

During the Superannuation Bill's passage through Parliament, the Government remained committed to trying to reach an agreement with the Council of Civil Service Unions and offered every opportunity to those unions that wished to engage constructively in negotiations. Five of them did so, and their proposals formed the basis of the discussions and subsequent agreement on which the new proposed scheme is based.

On 9 November, the Council of Civil Service Unions wrote with suggestions for areas that could be considered in further talks, and I responded on 15 November. The suggestions made in the council's letter would have had the effect of reducing the level of compensation paid to many lower-paid civil servants, and I therefore did not wish those suggestions to form the basis of further discussions. Having a new scheme that provides genuinely better protection for the lowest-paid civil service workers, many of whom are members of the PCS, has been an important aim of the Government throughout the discussions on reform.

I explained to the Council of Civil Service Unions that, in the absence of detailed proposals from the PCS, work would have to proceed on drafting the rules for a new scheme. On 6 December 2010 officials sent the draft rules for the new compensation scheme to the Council of Civil Service Unions to seek its views. Those rules form the basis of the new compensation scheme, which is being laid before Parliament today.

The Superannuation Act 2010 provides a fall-back position by introducing statutory caps on compensation which would be applied if, for any reason, the Government cannot implement the new proposals. The Government are now in a position to be able to repeal the caps set out in the Act through the Superannuation Act 2010 (Repeal of Limits on Compensation) Order 2010, which comes into force today. The repeal means that the statutory caps of a maximum of 15 months' pay for voluntary departures and 12 months' pay for compulsory departures, will not apply to the new civil service compensation scheme that is starting on 22 December 2010. The key points of the new civil service compensation scheme are as follows:

Voluntary Redundancy

Below normal pension age (either aged 60 or 65) — one month's pay per year of service up to 21 months, with a taper of between a maximum of 21 months' and six months' compensation for those approaching pension age;

At or above normal pension age — one month's pay per year of service up to a maximum of six months;

Staff who have reached minimum pension age (either aged 50 or 55) can choose to opt for early retirement on their current pension entitlement. Staff will be asked to surrender some (or all) of their severance payment to meet the cost of receiving this pension early.

Period of notice

All staff will be entitled to at least three months' notice.

Compulsory Redundancy

One month's pay per year of service up to 12 months. All staff who may face compulsory redundancy will first have had the opportunity to exit under voluntary terms.

Low and high pay thresholds

All staff earning less than £23,000, on a full time equivalent basis, will be treated as if they earn £23,000 for the purpose of calculating their redundancy payments.

There will also be an upper pay threshold of £149,820. Staff earning more will have their salary capped at this figure for the purpose of calculating their redundancy payments.

EDUCATION

Apprenticeships

The Minister for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning (Mr John Hayes): I am today setting out our proposed apprenticeships provisions in the forthcoming education Bill.

Apprenticeship offer to Young People — The Apprenticeships, Schools, Children and Learners Act 2009 (sections 91-99) introduced an "apprenticeship offer" for all suitably qualified young people who wanted one. Those young people are:

young people aged 16-18;

young people aged 19-24 who have a disability or learning difficulty; and

young people aged 19-24 who have been in local authority care.

This was to be achieved by placing a duty to secure sufficient number and variety of apprenticeship places for those eligible young people on the chief executive of skills funding. The sections of the Act covering the "offer" have not been commenced.

The education Bill will redefine the "offer". It will place a higher duty on the chief executive of skills funding to prioritise funding for apprenticeship training for the same people who were covered by the apprenticeship offer and who have secured an apprenticeship.

This new duty will constitute a much more robust deal for these young people because it will ensure that the chief executive of skills funding gives priority for funding apprenticeship training to those eligible for the "redefined offer". We will continue to work with those key stakeholders representing vulnerable and disadvantaged young people to ensure that they have equal access to "redefined offer". This new duty will be more straightforward, more meaningful and less bureaucratic than the apprenticeship offer set out in sections 91-99 of the Apprenticeships, Schools, Children and Learners Act 2009 "apprenticeship offer".

Amendments to functions of the Chief Executive of Skills Funding — The Apprenticeships, Schools, Children and Learners Act 2009 (section 6) names the chief executive of skills funding as the certifying authority for apprenticeships. We propose to amend this section in order to give the Secretary of State powers to designate the person or persons to be the certifying authority for apprenticeships in a manner which broadly mirrors similar provisions in Wales.

The rationale for this amendment is that this Government want to see the responsibility for issuing apprenticeships certificates remain with sector skills councils and other sector bodies rather than the national apprenticeships service, to whom the chief executive of skills funding would delegate this role. The national apprenticeships service will continue to have end to end responsibility for apprenticeships. However, under the new statutory apprenticeship arrangements, the intention is for sector skills councils and sector bodies to issue apprenticeship frameworks and are best placed therefore to ensure that the English framework requirements for the issue of a certificate in respect of the statutory completion conditions are met. In addition, there are currently no contingencies in the England provisions. The amended section will allow the same contingencies in England as in Wales that the Secretary of State may act as the certifying authority where there are no other appropriate persons to do so.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

General Affairs Council and Foreign Affairs Council

The Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington): The Foreign Affairs Council and General Affairs Council were held on 13-14 December in Brussels. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I represented the UK.

The agenda items covered were as follows:

FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL (FAC)

The FAC was chaired by Baroness Ashton. A provisional report of the meeting and adopted conclusions can be found at:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/118456.pdf

Sudan

Conclusions were adopted (see link).

Dame Rosalind Marsden, EU Special Representative in Sudan, briefed Ministers on preparations for the 9 January referendum. The Development Commissioner (Piebalgs) highlighted engagement with southern Sudan and the need to tackle Sudan's debt burden.

The Foreign Secretary stressed the need to focus on the EU's contingency planning, building capacity in the south, and engaging with the north.

Somalia

During a broad discussion on Somalia, many Ministers stressed the need for a more comprehensive EU strategy covering development, support for the Transitional Federal Government, counter-piracy and security work, and engaging the regional states. The Foreign Secretary encouraged the European Commission to enhance its engagement with Puntland.

Côte d'Ivoire

Conclusions were adopted (see link).

Ministers exchanged views on the recent presidential election. The conclusions include an intention to adopt restrictive measures against those who are obstructing peace and national reconciliation and jeopardising the proper outcome of the electoral process.

Afghanistan

Baroness Ashton summarised recent developments in Afghanistan and the NATO summit, which she had attended. The Foreign Secretary and others emphasised the need for the EU to focus on supporting governance, training capacity and delivering on the EU action plan agreed in October 2009 (see link below).

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/110789.pdf.

Middle East Peace Process

Conclusions were adopted (see link).

The Foreign Secretary welcomed the adoption of the conclusions, particularly the readiness of the EU to assist in the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza.

Baroness Ashton acknowledged frustrations over the lack of progress with the peace process, but noted the EU's collective commitment to continue supporting US-led efforts.

Western Balkans

Ministers briefly discussed the Kosovo elections of 12 December. Baroness Ashton and the Enlargement Commissioner (Füle) made a statement on this:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/118432.pdf.

There was broad consensus on the need for the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina to start as quickly as possible. There was a brief discussion of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and agreement that there should be a fuller discussion early next year.

Iran

Baroness Ashton briefed Ministers over dinner on the talks she attended with the E3+3 countries (France, Germany, UK, China, Russia and the US) and the Iranian nuclear negotiator in Geneva on 6-7 December. Details were set out in my earlier written ministerial statement looking ahead to this FAC/GAC.

Strategic Partners

Baroness Ashton set out her thoughts on the EU's relation with strategic partners, particularly China, Russia and the US, ahead of her presentation to the European Council on 16 December. There was a broad agreement for the UK's suggestion to operationalise Baroness Ashton's ideas with objectives and deliverables for each strategic partner. This was also discussed at the GAC (see December European Council below).

Priorities for 2011

Baroness Ashton presented her priorities for the external action service. These include the Western Balkans, the Middle East Peace Process, Iran, Syria, Maghreb, Sahel, Turkey and the Eastern Neighbourhood.

Moldova

Ministers had a brief exchange on Moldova's elections of 28 November and the continuing negotiations on forming a Government.

OSCE Summit

Ministers assessed the outcome of the OSCE summit in Astana of 1-2 December. Baroness Ashton underlined that the summit declaration provided a mandate to take forward work on the action plan which the EU would support. See link:

http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/2010/12/48067_en.pdf.

Lithuania set out its 2011 OSCE chairmanship-in-office programme. Priorities will include: developing a dialogue with Central Asia; greater co-operation between the OSCE, EU and NATO; media freedoms; and energy and cyber security.

GENERAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL (GAC)

The GAC was chaired by the Belgium Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Steven Vanackere (EU Presidency). The President of the Council, Herman Van Rompuy, joined Ministers over lunch.

A provisional report of the meeting and adopted conclusions can be found at:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/118495.pdf.

European Citizens' Initiative

The Council endorsed an agreement on the initiative, which aims to make it possible for EU citizens to call for a legislative proposal to be made on specific issues. I said that we agreed in principle with the initiative, but regretted that more was not done to minimise the burdens on member states. For this reason, and for reasons of parliamentary scrutiny, I noted that the UK would abstain from the vote.

December European Council

The main part of this discussion took place over lunch with Herman Van Rompuy.

Ministers examined draft conclusions for the Council to be held on 16-17 December. The December Council will look at the outline of a permanent crisis mechanism to safeguard the stability of the euro area and a limited amendment to the EU treaties required to create such a mechanism. Additionally, Ministers reviewed the EU's relationship with strategic partners ahead of Baroness Ashton's presentation to the December European Council.

I set out UK concerns about treaty change. There should be no transfer of competence to the EU. I emphasised that article 122(2) of the treaty of the functioning of the EU (TFEU) should not be used to provide assistance for economic or financial crises; that absolute clarity was necessary that the UK would not be bound by the new provisions; and that no liability should accrue to the EU budget or to non-participating states. On strategic partners, there was considerable support for my proposal for an annual review of the EU's relations with partners at European Council level.

EU Enlargement

After much discussion, Ministers agreed enlargement conclusions (see link) on the basis of the Commission's enlargement package published 9 November. I successfully argued for the inclusion of language on the need to protect the credibility of the enlargement process to ensure members states' continuing support and our ability to advance reforms in candidate countries. The UK's key concerns were protected in the individual country conclusions. One issue was referred to the European Council: the Commission's recommendation to grant candidate status to Montenegro.

February European Council

There was a brief review of the agenda for the February European Council, which includes energy policy and innovation.

Europe 2020

The presidency made a short presentation on the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy for jobs and growth. The next step will be a publication of the annual growth survey on 12 January. Europe 2020 will also be reviewed at the December European Council.

Cohesion Policy

There was short presentation by the Commissioner for Regional Policy (Johannes Hahn) on the Commission's report on structural cohesion funds (see link).

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/repor_en.htm.

UK/Russia Embassies

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr William Hague): On 10 December we requested that the Russian embassy in London withdraw a member of their staff from the UK. This was in response to clear evidence of activities by the Russian intelligence services against UK interests.

Russia responded on 16 December by requesting the removal of a member of our embassy staff in Moscow. We reject any basis for this action.

Both staff members have now been withdrawn.

We remain open to a more productive relationship with Russia, as with any other country, on the basis of respect for our laws.

HEALTH

Funding and Commissioning Routes for Public Health

The Secretary of State for Health (Mr Andrew Lansley): Today I am publishing a consultation document, "Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Consultation on the funding and commissioning routes for public health", seeking views on proposals that were initially outlined in the White Paper "Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our Strategy for public health in England" (Cm7985).

We are consulting on proposals for the commissioning and funding arrangements for delivery of public health services in the future. The consultation also asks questions about how the Department should implement some of our proposals.

The White Paper described a new era for public health, with a higher priority and dedicated resources. There will be ring-fenced public health funding from within the overall NHS budget. Local authorities will have a new role in improving the health and well-being of their population as part of a new system with localism at its heart and devolved responsibilities, freedoms and funding.

Directors of Public Health will be the strategic leaders for public health and reducing health inequalities in local communities, working in partnership with the local NHS and across the public, private and voluntary sectors. There will also be a new, dedicated, professional public health service—Public Health England—that will be part of the Department of Health.

This consultation is an opportunity to collect the views of public health professionals, NHS commissioners, local authorities, service providers—particularly the voluntary and independent sector—and all other interested parties.

The consultation will close at the end of March 2011.

The document has been placed in the Library. Copies are available to hon. Members from the Vote Office and to noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office.

Contaminated Blood

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Anne Milton): On 14 October 2010 I issued a written ministerial statement, *Official Report*, columns 30-31WS, announcing a review of aspects of support available to individuals infected with hepatitis C and/or HIV by NHS-supplied blood transfusions or blood products. In that statement, I said I expected to be able to report the outcome of this work and my intentions by the end of 2010. The review has been completed and submitted to Ministers, and I will update the House early in January when I publish the report.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Changes to the Immigration Rules

The Minister for Immigration (Damian Green): I am today laying before the House a statement of changes to the Immigration Rules pertaining to tier 1 and tier 2 of the points-based system. Copies of which will be available from the Vote Office.

On 28 June the Home Secretary announced in the House of Commons that the Government would introduce an interim limit on economic migration in anticipation of the introduction of a permanent limit in April 2011. This limit applied to out-of-country main applicants to tier 1 (general) between 19 July 2010 and April 2011, and numbers entering through this route would be equal to those entering in the equivalent period for 2009-10. The limit also applied to the number of migrants who can be offered jobs by sponsor employers through tier 2 (general). This route was to be reduced in the interim period by 1,300 migrants, the equivalent of a 5% reduction across the relevant routes of tiers 1 and 2.

The first of the changes in the statement of changes to the Immigration Rules will close the tier 1 (general) category of the Immigration Rules to persons applying from outside the United Kingdom. I am taking this step as a result of the volume of applications that have been received since 19 July 2010, the date I set the interim limit on tier 1 general.

The second of these changes, specifying the level of the tier 2 (general) interim limit in the Immigration Rules, is being made to take account of the divisional court judgment of 17 December 2010 in the cases brought by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants and the English Community Care Association. The divisional court determined that in order for the Government's interim limit policy to have legal effect the level of the limit should be specified in the Immigration Rules, as opposed to UK Border Agency guidance.

The statement of changes remedies the matter. The interim limit on tier 2 (general) will apply from 21 December 2010 until 5 April 2011. The level of the limit is 10,832 and will apply to the number of certificates of sponsorship available to licensed tier 2 (general) sponsors. The changes will take effect immediately to ensure that employers and other users of the UK's immigration system have certainty about its operation. I would welcome the opportunity to debate these immigration rules changes should Members choose to pray against the statement of changes.

The Home Secretary has been granted a certificate to appeal: either directly to the Supreme Court if it grants permission or, if not, to the Court of Appeal.

Tier 1 (general) will be closed to out-of-country applications because of the number of applications that have been received since 19 July 2010. The route is not being closed in response to the divisional court's decision.

The statement of changes to the Immigration Rules laid before Parliament on 28 June 2010 was constructed to provide for the application of interim limits on the number of applications for entry clearance granted under the tier 1 (general) category. Under the Immigration Rules as amended by the changes made on 19 July, applications over and above this upper interim limit would be rolled over for consideration in a subsequent grant period. However, as the Home Secretary announced to Parliament on 23 November, the Government have decided tier 1 (general) route will not continue in its current form and will be refocused as a route aimed at entrepreneurs, investors and the exceptionally talented. This means that there will be no additional allocation of places under the tier 1 (general) category under which rolled-over applications could be considered once the current interim limit is reached.

We should not continue to accept applications under the existing route if they cannot be granted once the current interim limit is reached. We expect, taking into account current trends in applications and refusal rates, the interim limit to be reached imminently. The statement of changes to the Immigration Rules therefore removes existing provision for the granting of entry clearance in the tier 1 (general) category.

I regret that, given the difficulty in anticipating the date on which the interim limit would be reached, it has not been possible to observe the usual convention of laying such a statement of changes before Parliament 21 days in advance of its entry into force. I also wish to clarify that the numerical limit applied to tier 1 applications under the interim limit is 5,100 and not 5,400 as the Merits of Statutory Instruments Committee has previously been informed. The latter figure was the limit that would have applied if interim limits had commenced on 1 July 2010, whereas in fact they commenced on 19 July 2010.

This change is effective from 23 December and applications for entry clearance as a tier 1 (general) migrant made on or after that date will not be accepted. Applications for entry clearance as a tier 1 (general) migrant made before that date will still be considered against the existing Immigration Rules. These changes do not apply to those who have existing leave in the tier 1 (general) category and require an extension of stay, nor do they apply to those presently in the United Kingdom in another category of stay and are applying for a variation of leave as a tier 1 (general) migrant.

As noted above, tier 1 of the points-based system will be redesigned to make enhanced provision for entrepreneurs and investors and to incorporate new provisions for the exceptionally talented. This will ensure that tier 1 continues to offer a route for those who are able to make the greatest economic contribution to the United Kingdom. These changes will be introduced in April next year and I will announce the detail of these new arrangements to Parliament in due course.

TRANSPORT

Winter Resilience Review

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Philip Hammond): As I explained to the House yesterday, in light of the early and severe onset of winter last month I asked David Quarmby CBE to follow up his earlier review of winter resilience with an urgent audit of how well highway authorities and transport operators in England have coped with the cold weather between 24 November and 9 December 2010. David's report to me is published today (transportwinterresilience.independent.gov.uk) and copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

In the main, he has found that the country's transport systems coped well with the early severe weather during that period. However, given the more recent extreme cold snap, and that forecasts predict snow into the new year, we welcome David's recommendations on how we can further bolster our resilience. It is now vitally important that those to whom they are addressed take these recommendations forward without delay.

The audit emphasises the volatile nature of British weather, but notes the Met Office's view that the three severe winters are genuinely independent events. However, as I explained to the House yesterday, I will be assessing advice from the Government's chief scientific adviser, Professor Sir John Beddington, on the longer-term implications of the changing climate and the way in which they should influence our investment decisions across the sector in relation to winter resilience.

The report finds that local highway authorities generally coped well with the extreme and early winter conditions, but used a significant amount of their salt stocks in doing so. To assist with salt supply over the Christmas and new year holiday period when deliveries from the mines tend to become more infrequent, I am making available to highways authorities 30,000 tonnes from the national strategic salt supply which was established earlier in the year in response to Quarmby's first review. I have also asked the Highways Agency to make arrangements for the import of further supplies of salt, up to an additional 250,000 tonnes, to strengthen further our resilience. This is expected to start arriving in January.

But we need to ensure that we make the best possible use of existing stocks, new mine production and imported supplies. As we cannot be sure how long the current severe weather will persist, or how often it will recur this winter, prudence requires that all highway authorities should critically examine their current levels of usage and look for economies to maximise the duration of existing stocks.

Varying spread rates between local highway authorities have been identified as a concern for David Quarmby. I have already asked the UK Roads Liaison Group and the National Winter Service Research Group to prepare additional straightforward guidance on spread rates based on all evidence available, so that all highway authorities can adopt the practice of the best.

The report also refers to the extraordinary events that occurred on the M25 at junction 3 on 30 November. Highways Agency officials have already briefed me on these events, and I look forward to a full report in due course analysing the incident and setting out the lessons that the agency have learnt.

The rail network has been particularly badly affected by the weather this year, perhaps in contrast to the two previous winters. Quarmby's recommendations here are for the longer term; and I am asking the rail industry to formulate proposals on contingency timetables, real-time information and third rail alternatives. I will also ask them to conduct the recommended review of their operational performance.

Although the focus today is very much on aviation and the problems at Heathrow in particular, this was less of an issue during the period that this report covers and there are therefore no specific recommendations directed at the aviation sector. It is clear, however, that, as a separate piece of work, we will need to work with BAA and the airlines to understand exactly what went wrong at Heathrow over the weekend and why it has taken the airport so long to recover.

I would like to thank David Quarmby, who has delivered this audit report to a very challenging timetable. As with his previous reports, his analysis and recommendations are clear-sighted, and will help the transport sector to improve its resilience to winter weather.

Petitions

Tuesday 7 December 2010

OBSERVATIONS

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Proposed redevelopment of Rushden Hospital site (Northamptonshire)

The Humble Petition of residents of Rushden, Northamptonshire and the surrounding areas,

Sheweth that the proposed redevelopment of the Rushden Hospital site for housing is unpopular, ill-advised and detrimental to the residents of Rushden; that over 25% of the residents of Rushden petitioned the House of Commons for a new outpatient facility in the town, the majority wanting the new facility on the Rushden hospital site; that the proposal to build housing on the site instead of an NHS facility is unacceptable and the impact on the surrounding roads of a large housing development and the density of the development and the proposed cut-through to the Greenacre Drive Estate is wholly detrimental to local residents.

Wherefore your Petitioners pray that your Honourable House urges the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to urge the Department of Health to withdraw the planning application and further urges him to request that the District Council of East Northamptonshire and the County Council and the Primary Care Trust work together to provide a suitable health facility on the site.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.—*[Presented by Mr Peter Bone, Official Report, 20 July 2010; Vol. 514, c. 320.]*

[P000844]

Observations from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government:

The proposal relating to the redevelopment of the Rushden Hospital site for housing is a local matter. East Northamptonshire District Council is responsible for the day to day planning control in its area, and the Secretary of State cannot comment on the merits or otherwise of any application. The Government's policy is not to interfere with the jurisdiction of a local planning authority unless it is necessary to do so. This is because local authority councillors are elected to represent the views of local people and, in the main, it is these councillors who are in the best position to decide whether a development should go ahead. It is, of course, for local planning authorities to provide whatever justification it may be appropriate to give for their decisions and procedures.

In determining a planning application the local planning authority who have full knowledge of the local circumstances, are required to have regard to all material considerations including the development plan, national policies and views expressed by third parties.

The Secretary of State might decide to call-in the application for his own determination if he considers that it raises matters of more than local importance. Such cases may include, for example, those which, in his opinion:

may conflict with national policies on important matters;

could have significant effects beyond their immediate locality;

give rise to substantial regional or national controversy;

raise significant architectural and urban design issues; or

may involve the interests of national security or of foreign Governments.

The Secretary of State's policy is to be very selective whether to call-in an application as it is possible that this proposal may, at some future date, come within his jurisdiction. It would therefore be inappropriate to comment on the issues raised in the petition.

Sunnyhurst Wood (Lancashire)

The Petition of the Friends of Sunnyhurst Wood and others,

Declares that the storage of silt from the Paddling Pond and Moat Lake in Sunnyhurst Wood results in the formation of large unsightly mounds over long periods.

The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons urges the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to call on Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to take steps to prevent the storage of silt in Sunnyhurst Wood.

And the Petitioners remain, etc.—*[Presented by Jake Berry, Official Report,* 27 July 2010; Vol. 514, c. 973.]

[P000854]

Observations from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government:

The decision on whether to take steps to prevent the storage of silt in Sunnyhurst Wood is a matter for the local planning authority. In taking its decision it would consider whether the removal of the silt could be deemed to be an engineering operation under the terms of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act and/or whether the storage of the material could be viewed as being a material change in the use of the land. If either case were true, the authority would then consider whether any of these activities had been granted a general permission under the Act, and was not subject to specific planning consent. In any case the matter would be for local determination.

Wind Farm (Puriton, Somerset)

The Petition of the residents of Woolavington and others,

Declares that they are concerned about plans by EDF Energy Renewables to develop a new wind farm at Withy Farm near Puriton; about the implications for local residents of noise from the turbines; the intrusive nature of the wind turbines and any possible additional power lines associated with them on the unique landscape of the Somerset Levels; and the potential damage to wildlife and their habitats.

The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons urges the Government to take all possible steps to take the impact on local communities and the landscape fully into account when considering plans submitted for the siting of wind farms and the provision of energy generation through renewable sources.

And the Petitioners remain, etc.—*[Presented by Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger, Official Report, 26 July 2010; Vol. 514, c. 836.]*

[P000850]

Observations from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government:

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government is aware that EDF Energy Renewables carried out a public consultation over the summer on proposals for a wind farm on agricultural land to the north of the village of Puriton in Somerset. He understands that EDF's publicly stated intention is to submit a planning application this autumn, but that no application has yet been submitted to the local planning authority.

The Government's policy is not to interfere with the jurisdiction of a local planning authority unless it is necessary to do so. This is because local authority councillors are elected to represent the views of local people and, in the main, it is these councillors who are in the best position to decide whether a development should go ahead. Local planning authorities are required to determine planning applications in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. They will have regard to all material considerations including the planning concerns raised by local people and national policy. The considerations set out in national policy include the potential impacts of proposed development on both local communities and the surrounding landscape.

The Secretary of State might decide to call-in an application for his own determination if he considers that it raises matters of more than local importance, but his policy is to be very selective about this. Applicants also have the right of appeal to the Secretary of State if an application is refused, or granted subject to conditions, or if it has not been determined within the specified period. As it is possible that this proposal may, at some future date, come within his jurisdiction, it would be inappropriate to comment on the issues raised in the petition.

Petition

Thursday 9 December 2010

PRESENTED PETITION

Petition presented to the House but not read on the Floor

Day Care Centres (Cheshire)

The Petition of residents of Kelsall, Malpas, Tattenhall, Tarporley and Audlem and their neighbouring districts,

Declares that the Petitioners, who include the elderly and vulnerable in the Eddisbury constituency, together with their carers, families and local supporters, support the campaign by the hon. Member for Eddisbury to secure the future of the day care centres in the communities of Kelsall, Malpas, Tattenhall, Tarporley and Audlem.

The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons urges the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to encourage Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council as part-funders today and prospectively to seek one or more alternative bodies to take over the running of these vital day care centres in order to secure their long term future before Age Concern Cheshire abandon their current responsibilities.

And the Petitioners remain, etc. *[Presented by Mr Stephen O'Brien.]*

[P000872]

Petition

Wednesday 15 December 2010

OBSERVATIONS

HEALTH

Closure of Ryedale Ward, Malton Hospital (North Yorkshire)

The Petition of Dr Michael Lynch, Derwent Practice, Norton Road, Malton,

Declares that the Petitioner has a strong objection to the way in which North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust have implemented the closure of Ryedale ward at Malton Hospital, without public consultation.

The Petitioner therefore requests that the House of Commons urges the Government to take all possible steps to reinstate what is a highly valued and much needed facility at Malton Hospital for the population of Ryedale.

And the Petitioner remains, etc.—*[Presented by Miss Anne McIntosh, Official Report,* 16 November 2010; Vol. 518, c. 857 .]

[P000868]

Observations from the Secretary of State for the Department of Health:

This Government are committed to devolving power to local communities, to the people, patients, GPs and councils who are best placed to determine the nature of their local NHS services. This Government have pledged that, in future, all service changes must be led by clinicians and patients, not be driven from the top down. To this end, the Secretary of State for Health has outlined new, strengthened criteria that he expects decisions on NHS service changes to meet. They must focus on improving patient outcomes, consider patient choice, have support from GP commissioners and be based on sound clinical evidence.

The Ryedale ward within Malton Community hospital was temporarily closed in October 2010, to support a trial of enhanced community services to allow patients to be treated closer to home. The closure of the Ryedale ward is for a trial period only. The outcome of this trial period will be fully evaluated in April 2011, which will inform any decision on next steps beyond that point. If the trial leads to a proposed, permanent service change, full consultation and engagement would be undertaken in accordance with due process, and the scheme would be assessed against the four tests.

Petition

Tuesday 21 December 2010

PRESENTED PETITION

Petition presented to the House but not read on the Floor

Bus Fares (Bristol, Bath and surrounding areas)

The Petition of Laura Ann Friend, Adam Heard and residents of South Gloucestershire, Bath and North East Somerset, and Bristol,

Declares that the Petitioners are concerned about the high cost of bus fares for travellers needing to use services that extend beyond the boundaries of the cities of Bath and Bristol; notes that the costs of travel can be substantial where special city day fares are not available; and further notes that reducing bus fares can act as a means of reducing traffic pollution, easing congestion, promoting healthy lifestyles and even reducing the cost of living in these difficult economic times.

The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons urges the Government to take all possible steps to reduce bus fares in Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Bath and the surrounding areas.

And the Petitioners remain, etc. *[Presented by Chris Skidmore .]*

[P000874]

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 6 December 2010

WALES

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what steps she has taken since her appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within her responsibility. [28365]

Mr David Jones: We have no plans for any expenditure on conferences.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much her Department spent on overtime for staff working within her private office in each of the last five years. [28558]

Mr David Jones: The following amounts were spent on overtime for staff in the Secretary of State's private office in the last five years:

	£
2005-06	3,910
2006-07	4,062
2007-08	4,385
2008-09	14,567
2009-10	14,577

The Wales Office has instigated a freeze on overtime claims across all teams, encouraging staff to instead take time off in lieu for additional hours worked to improve the work life balance of members of staff.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much her Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28148]

Mr David Jones: The Wales Office spent the following amounts on press cuttings:

	£
2008-09	3,910
2009-10	11,794
2010-11	6,991

The costs in 2008-09 cover payments from December 2008, when the contract started, until March 2009. The costs of press cuttings before December 2008 could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what estimate she has made of her Department's expenditure on printing (*a*) Command Papers, (*b*) papers laid before Parliament by Act, (*c*) consultation documents and (*d*) other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28372]

Mr David Jones: This information is not held in a way that allows the costs of such expenditure to be separated out from other office expenditure.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much her Department spent on grey fleet in (*a*) 2008-09 and (*b*) 2009-10. [28857]

Mr David Jones: My Department spent the following amounts on grey fleet:

2008-09: £2,045

2009-10: £2,174.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much his Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28146]

Mr Paterson: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 2W.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan and Iraq: Peacekeeping Operations

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which (*a*) corps and (*b*) regiment had the highest (i) fatality and (ii) casualty rate in (A) Iraq and (B) Afghanistan in each year since 2001-02. [27326]

Mr Robathan: The following table shows the corps and regiment which had the highest number of fatalities in Afghanistan in each financial year since 2001-02. Where multiple corps or regiments are listed they are joint equal for the highest number of fatalities in a year.

Financial year	*Corps*	*Regiment*
2001-02	No fatalities	No fatalities
2002-03	Royal Logistics Corps	Allied Command Europe Mobile Force Combat Service Support Battalion
2003-04	Infantry	Rifle Volunteers[1]
2004-05	No fatalities	No fatalities

Financial year	*Corps*	*Regiment*
2005-06	Infantry	Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Light Infantry[1]
2006-07	Royal Air Force	120 Squadron RAF
2007-08	Infantry	Royal Anglian Regiment Mercian Regiment[2]
2008-09	Infantry	Parachute Regiment
2009-10	Infantry	The Rifles

The following table shows the corps and regiment which suffered the highest number of serious injuries in Afghanistan in each financial year since 2007. Information is not available prior to 2007.

Financial year	*Corps*	*Regiment*
2007-08	Infantry	40 Commando Royal Marines
2008-09	Infantry	45 Commando Royal Marines
2009-10	Infantry	The Rifles

The following table shows the corps and regiment which had the highest number of fatalities in Iraq in each financial year since 2002-03.

Financial year	*Corps*	*Regiment*
2002-03	3 Commando Brigade	849 Naval Air Squadron UK Landing Force Command Support Group
2003-04	Infantry	156 Provost Company, RMP[3]
2004-05	Infantry	The Black Watch[4]
2005-06	Infantry	Staffordshire Regiment[5] Royal Regiment of Fusiliers
2006-07	Infantry	12 Regiment Royal Artillery Duke of Lancaster's Regiment The Rifles[6]
2007-08	Infantry	The Rifles
2008-09	Army Air Corps Infantry Royal Engineers	9 Regiment Army Air Corps HQ 20 Armoured Brigade Princess of Wales Royal Regiment
2009-10	No fatalities	No fatalities

The following table shows the corps and regiment which suffered the most serious injuries in Iraq in each financial year since 2007. Information is not available prior to 2007.

Financial Year	*Corps*	*Regiment*
2007-08	Infantry	The Rifles
2008-09	No serious injuries	No serious injuries
2009-10	Infantry	Princess of Wales Royal Regiment

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment has been made of the role of Afghan forces in protecting supply convoys to UK forces; and if he will make a statement. [26834]

Mr Robathan: Supplies are delivered to UK forces in Afghanistan through a number of means, including military and contractor convoys. Following President Karzai's decree on 16 August 2010 to disband private military security companies, the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan and the International Security Assistance Force have been working with the Government of Afghanistan on behalf of the international community to implement the decree. Work is ongoing to develop an Afghan-led solution, including for convoy protection where required, which will include the use of elements of the Afghan National Security Forces.

Mr Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 26 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 173W, on Afghanistan: peacekeeping operations, how many of the 84 Hellfire missiles launched from Reaper unmanned aerial vehicles in Afghanistan since May 2008 were Hellfire AGM 114N missiles. [28177]

Mr Robathan: I am withholding the information as its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of our armed forces.

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[1] Now part of The Rifles.
[2] The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment became 1st Battalion the Mercian Regiment during their deployment to Afghanistan in 2007.
[3] 156 Provost Company RMP is an independent Provost Company.
[4] Now part of the Royal Regiment of Scotland.
[5] Now part of the Mercian Regiment.
[6] The Devonshire and Dorset Light Infantry and the Light Infantry became part of the Rifles while deployed to Iraq in 2006-07.

Air Force: Military Bases

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* civilian and *(b)* military staff were employed at each RAF base in the UK in each year since 2007. [27580]

Nick Harvey: The available figures for the number of civilian and military staff employed at major RAF bases in the UK in each year since 2007 are shown in the following table. To provide the answer incorporating every RAF base in the UK would incur disproportionate cost.

	April 2007		*April 2008*		*April 2009*		*April 2010*	
RAF base	*Military*	*MOD civilian*	*Military*	*MOD civilian*	*Military*	*MOD civilian*	*Military*	*MOD civilian*
RAF Benson	1,500	170	1,530	160	1,500	160	1,840	150
RAF Brize Norton	3,420	640	3,200	620	2,680	600	2,900	610
RAF College Cranwell	1,380	480	1,460	470	1,660	480	1,540	490
RAF Coningsby	2,000	280	1,800	290	1,790	300	2,070	290
RAF Cosford	1,040	580	1,400	540	1,740	560	2,260	610
RAF Cottesmore	1,540	210	1,690	200	1,870	200	1,920	210
RAF Halton	880	200	1,220	200	1,880	230	1,380	220
RAF High Wycombe	1,530	570	1,560	600	1,540	660	1,610	640
RAF Honington	1,070	290	1,310	290	1,670	270	1,620	280
RAF Kinloss	1,540	310	1,460	310	1,420	310	1,380	310
RAF Leeming	1,460	260	1,370	240	1,600	260	1,620	290
RAF Leuchars	1,640	290	1,480	290	1,340	290	1,010	270
RAF Linton On Ouse	280	180	270	180	280	180	290	180
RAF Lossiemouth	2,080	380	1,750	370	1,720	370	1,830	370
RAF Lyneham	2,390	260	2,280	250	2,250	240	2,250	240
RAF Marham	2,590	360	2,520	380	2,490	370	2,570	390
RAF Northolt	450	110	420	340	490	360	620	400
RAF Odiham	1,840	90	1,750	90	1,710	100	1,860	110
RAF Shawbury	460	120	480	120	550	110	580	120
RAF Valley	350	60	340	60	360	60	380	80
RAF Waddington	2,430	540	2,370	560	2,320	560	2,310	540
RAF Wittering	1,650	250	1,640	240	1,570	240	1,650	240

Notes:
1. The military figure includes all trained and un-trained personnel. Full time reserve personnel and mobilised reservists are excluded.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10, numbers ending in five have been rounded to the nearest 20 to prevent systematic bias.
3. The figures represent the number of UK service and civilian personnel that are stationed at that postcode.

Aircraft Carriers

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he made of the cost to the public purse under each budget heading of the cancellation of the order for the second aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales. [28534]

Peter Luff *[holding answer 3 December 2010]:* The implications of a number of options for the carrier programme were assessed during the Strategic Defence and Security Review, including our liabilities under relevant contracts and industrial agreements such as the so-called "Yellow Book". I do not propose to release the advice provided to Ministers on these liabilities.

Armed Forces: Blood Transfusions

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans his Department has for the use of blood safety technologies in the treatment of wounded soldiers in combat zones. [26936]

Mr Robathan: The Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO, a UK independent non-departmental public body run by the Department of Health), performed a risk assessment of strategies for the reduction of risk of bacterial contamination of platelets in 2009. The committee concluded at its meeting on 27 January 2010 that pathogen inactivation (PI) of platelets should not be implemented at this particular time, due to uncertainties around patient safety, increased donor exposure and efficacy of PI platelets.

We will continue to monitor developments in this area.

There are currently no plans for the use of blood safety technologies in the treatment of wounded soldiers in combat zones.

Armed Forces: Drugs

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many compulsory drugs tests (CDTs) were performed on Army personnel in each of the first three quarters of 2010; and how many had positive results for *(a)* cocaine and *(b)* ecstasy in each such quarter. [27721]

Mr Robathan: The number of compulsory drug tests (CDTs) undertaken by the Army in each quarter since January 2010 and the positive results for cocaine and ecstasy are shown in the following table:

Period	*Number of CDTs provided*	*Cocaine positive*	*Ecstasy positive*
1 January-31 March 2010	20,782	55	2
1 April-30 June 2010	27,140	81	0
1 July-30 September 2010	19,612	63	1

Defence: Employment

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department has estimated the number of jobs in the UK to be supported by defence expenditure in each year to 2014-15. [26860]

Peter Luff: The Ministry of Defence no longer compiles historical estimates of UK employment relating to equipment and non-equipment expenditure in UK industry and commerce. The last estimates, for 2007-08, were published in UK Defence Statistics in September 2009. The Department has never produced forecast estimates of UK employment.

Departmental Art Works

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what his most recent estimate is of the monetary value of the *(a)* fine art, *(b)* antique furniture, *(c)* clocks, *(d)* photographs and *(e)* other categories of antiques held on his Department's estates; [27828]

(2) how many individual works of art and antiques owned by his Department have been valued at over £15,168. [27836]

Mr Robathan: In line with the policy accepted by the Department for Culture Media and Sport for the Government Art Collection, no estimate is maintained for the value of artwork and antiques in the Ministry of Defence Art Collection. There would be a high cost associated with valuing the collection that outweighs the value of holding the information.

European Fighter Aircraft

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what timetable he has set for the implementation of the proposed increase in the number of Typhoon Eurofighters in operation at RAF Leuchars. [27576]

Mr Robathan: Number 6 Squadron, operating at RAF Leuchars, is planned to receive its full complement of Typhoon aircraft by September 2011. Decisions on the future planned build-up of Typhoon squadrons at RAF Leuchars will be announced following completion of the work announced in the Strategic Defence and Security Review to examine future RAF basing requirements.

Ex-servicemen: Radiation Exposure

Mr Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what data relating to nuclear test veterans the Atomic Weapons Establishment has supplied to his Department. [26985]

Mr Robathan: The Atomic Weapons Establishment has provided over 12,000 documents to the Ministry of Defence in relation to the Atomic Veterans Group litigation and the war pensions appeals cases. These documents cover a wide range of information relating to the nuclear tests.

France: Aircraft Carriers

Mr Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information his Department holds on the number of days the French aircraft carrier Charles De Gaulle was at sea in each of the last 10 years; whether he has made a comparative assessment of the number of days spent at sea by French and British aircraft carriers; and if he will make a statement. [27912]

Peter Luff: The UK and France have agreed to develop the capability to deploy a UK-French integrated carrier strike group incorporating assets owned by both countries by the early 2020s. Work to achieve this is at an early stage and will take account, among other things, of the availability of each nation's naval assets. The Ministry of Defence has not conducted a comparative assessment of the number of days spent at sea by French and British aircraft carriers.

Future Large Aircraft

Mr Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence by what date he expects the A400M transport aircraft to enter service with the Royal Air Force. [27189]

Peter Luff: The forecast in-service date for the A400M aircraft is March 2015, as published in the Major Projects Report 2010.

Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the correspondence address is of each supplier of *(a)* equipment, *(b)* personnel, *(c)* parts and *(d)* assembly facilities for the Joint Strike Fighter Project in each (i) Government office region, (ii) local authority area and (iii) Parliamentary constituency. [28023]

Peter Luff: Under the terms of the Production, Sustainment and Follow-on Development (PFSD) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by all nine Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) partner nations in 2006, all requirements for JSF articles are co-ordinated centrally by the US Department of Defence to ensure economies of scale. This includes placing contracts with Lockheed Martin as the Prime Contractor for JSF who are required by the PFSD MOU to select sub contractors and suppliers on a best value basis. While UK industry has an exceptionally good position as suppliers to JSF, we do not routinely collect or maintain the details requested.

Military Bases

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what criteria he plans to use to determine which RAF bases will be closed as a result of the implementation of the recommendation of the Strategic Defence and Security Review; [27717]

(2) what *(a)* other Government Departments and agencies and *(b)* other organisations his Department (i) has consulted and (ii) plans to consult in relation to the closure of RAF bases in Scotland as a result of the implementation of the recommendations of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. [27718]

Mr Robathan: The Ministry of Defence is now addressing the full range of issues affecting the defence estate following the Strategic Defence and Security Review. This will, in some cases, involve change of use for individual sites, and potentially some closures, but no decisions have yet been made. The work under way is aimed at delivering a long-term, cost effective solution that enables the delivery of operational capability and provides value for money for the taxpayer. We do not anticipate bringing this work to a conclusion before spring 2011. We plan to be as open as we can be and will consult with other Government Departments, the Devolved Administrations and local communities and relevant agencies as appropriate.

Military Decorations

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department plans to consult the National Defence Medal Campaign as part of its forthcoming review of the rules governing the awarding of medals. [27946]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* I can confirm that the review of the rules governing the award of medals will report to me and that work is now under way.

The background and arguments on the case for a National Defence Medal are well known and understood by the Ministry of Defence. Indeed we have received many representations from campaigners. Their views will be considered as part of the review.

Nimrod Aircraft

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the capabilities are of the *(a)* Hercules c-130 and *(b)* Nimrod MRA4 in respect of (i) maritime radar capability and (ii) carrying sonobuoys; and if he will make a statement. [27002]

Peter Luff: The radars fitted to the Nimrod MRA4 and the Hercules C-130 aircraft have different capabilities because they were designed for different roles. The MRA4 was designed to operate a maritime surveillance radar capable of detecting, tracking and identifying surface ships and to deploy and monitor a variety of sonobuoys.

Hercules C-130 aircraft are fitted with radar systems that provide a basic maritime search capability, in addition to weather and collision avoidance. The Hercules c-130 is not equipped to deploy or operate sonobuoys.

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will estimate the cost to the public purse of airborne intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance support for counter-terrorism purposes in respect of *(a)* offshore oil rigs, *(b)* the UK fishing fleet and *(c)* wind farms of the use of (i) Nimrod MRA4 aircraft and (ii) alternative methods; what assessment he has made of the capacity to provide such support following the cancellation of the Nimrod MRA4; and if he will make a statement. [28410]

Peter Luff: I have nothing to add to the answer I gave to the hon. Member on 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 748-49W.

Rescue Services

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements he has made to provide search and rescue cover for *(a)* Typhoons and *(b)* F-35 Joint Strike Fighters refuelling over the ocean from the new Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft following the cancellation of the Nimrod MRA4; and if he will make a statement. [28411]

Peter Luff: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 28 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 450-51W, to the right hon. Member for Coventry North East (Mr Ainsworth) and the hon. Members for East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow (Mr McCann) and for North Durham (Mr Jones).

Unmanned Air Vehicles

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the correspondence address is of each supplier of *(a)* equipment, *(b)* personnel, *(c)* parts and *(d)* assembly facilities for the production of unmanned aerial vehicles of each (i) type, (ii) range, (iii) capital and maintenance cost and (iv) lifespan in each (A) Government office region, (B) local authority area and (C) Parliamentary constituency. [28166]

Peter Luff: I will write to the hon. Member in due course.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Carbon Emissions

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how much the Government have spent on research on a direct relationship between carbon dioxide emissions attributable to human activity and the average global temperature level in the last three years. [28441]

Gregory Barker: In the last three years (i.e. financial years 2008-09 to 2010-11), DECC and DEFRA have spent an estimated £1.8 million on researching the relationship between carbon dioxide emissions attributable to human activity and the average global temperature level. This has been done through DECC and DEFRA support to the Met Office Hadley Centre Climate Programme and the AVOID (Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change) Programme.

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what financial contributions his Department plans to make to Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation plus in each financial year from 2010-11 to 2014-15. [28484]

Gregory Barker: The UK has committed £300 million for forests for the fast start period (2010-12). This is 20% of our £1.5 billion fast start commitment.

For the next four years (i.e. the spending review period), the UK has allocated £2.9 billion for international climate finance. This includes fully funding our remaining fast start commitment. Further decisions on programming this finance will be taken next year.

Energy

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what agreements were made on energy subsidy reform at the G20 Seoul Summit. [28471]

Gregory Barker: At the Seoul Summit, G20 leaders reaffirmed their commitment to rationalise and phase out over the medium term inefficient fossil fuel subsidies which promote wasteful consumption. G20 Finance and Energy Ministers were directed to report to the 2011 Summit in France on progress in implementing country-specific strategies for reducing subsidy. The International Energy Agency, World Bank, OPEC and OECD were asked to review progress towards reducing levels of subsidy and report to the 2011 summit.

Energy Supply

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what assessment he has made of the merits of the introduction of a regular obligation on owners of private electricity and gas networks to tender energy supply through an open and competitive process; and if he will make a statement. [26986]

Charles Hendry: The approach owners of private electricity and gas networks take to sourcing the electricity and gas provided to their customers is a commercial matter for the owners of those networks and will depend on the characteristics of each network. We are not seeking to introduce any obligations to regularly tender for energy supply, although EU procurement directives and regulations do impose certain obligations on public sector organisations.

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change on which dates officials of his Department met to consider the European Court of Justice's Citiworks ruling and the consultation on the provision of third party access to licence exempt electricity and gas networks with *(a)* representatives of the ports sector, *(b)* other transport operators, *(c)* representatives of utility providers and *(d)* representatives of other commercial landlords. [27009]

Charles Hendry: Before publication of the consultation on the provision of third party access to licence exempt electricity and gas networks my officials sought meetings with stakeholders across a wide range of sectors. Meetings that took place were as follows:

30 November 2009: Fontenergy

1 December 2009: Thameswey Energy

1 February 2010: Workshop attended by: Competitive Networks Association, Combined Heat and Power Association, Fontenergy, Utilicom (now Cofely District Energy), Energy Networks Association, Ramboll UK Limited, Thameswey Energy, Galliford Try, Sembcorp, National Caravans Association, London borough of Camden; Network Rail, Consumer Focus, Energy Retail Association.

10 February 2010: Utilicom (now Cofely District Energy)

16 February 2010: Energy Retailers' Association

22 February 2010: Ports Authority and Bristol Port Company

1 March 2010: British Property Federation

10 March 2010: Airport Owners Association

14 April 2010: British Land

14 April 2010: More Land

24 August 2010: GTC

24 August 2010: Combined Heat and Power Association

31 August 2010: Network Rail

1 September: Fontenergy

2 September 2010: EON

9 September 2010: Bristol Port Company and UK Major Ports Group

14 September 2010: Cofely District Energy

15 September: British Property Federation

15 September: Thameswey Energy

26 October 2010: UKMPG, Forth Ports, ABP, Port of Belfast, Bristol Port Company, DP World, PD Teesport, Hutchinson Ports UL, Port of Tilbury.

Fossil Fuels

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will take steps to include the issue of global fossil fuel subsidy reform in the EU position for the Cancun climate change conference. [28475]

Gregory Barker: Fossil fuel subsidies are not within the scope of the agenda of the United Nations Framework convention on climate change conference of parties in Cancun. International fossil fuel subsidy reform has the potential to lead to significant reductions in global carbon emissions and support the UK's energy security. The UK has strongly supported the G20 initiative to rationalise and phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that promote wasteful consumption and will continue to work through the G20 to seek progress on these issues.

Geothermal Power

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change whether his Department plans to introduce exploration licensing legislation to facilitate geothermal heat and power projects. [28470]

Charles Hendry: The practical and legal aspects of an exploration licensing scheme covering geothermal heat and power projects are currently under examination by DECC officials.

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent request his Department has received for meetings with representatives of the deep geothermal energy industry; and what response was made. [28473]

Charles Hendry: DECC Ministers have received a meeting request from the Deep Geothermal Group within the Renewable Energy Association, and a meeting is planned for the new year. DECC officials also met representatives of the deep geothermal industry in October, to discuss deep geothermal power and the renewables obligation, and in September to discuss deep geothermal heat and the proposed renewable heat incentive.

Stephen Gilbert: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what assessment his Department has made of the barriers to the development of deep geothermal energy in the UK; and what steps his Department is taking to remove such barriers to deployment. [28861]

Charles Hendry: We have assessed deep geothermal energy alongside other innovative renewable technologies. A particular barrier is the sector's ability to secure upfront capital support, which we have addressed through the two rounds of the Deep Geothermal Challenge Fund. The first round awarded £4 million in capital grants to three projects in financial year 2009-10, while the second round is currently under way with several bids under consideration. Another potential barrier is establishing investor confidence in ongoing returns at a commercial rate. This is provided by deep geothermal power's eligibility for two renewables obligation certificates under the Renewables Obligation, as for other innovative renewable power technologies. Deep geothermal energy has also been considered during the development of the Renewable Heat Incentive. In addition, some in the industry have commented that the lack of a licensing regime creates a barrier to the sector's development. My officials are looking into this as set out in my answer today to my hon. Friend the Member for Richmond Park (Zac Goldsmith) to question 28470.

Stephen Gilbert: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (1) what assessment his Department has made of the requirements for support of deep geothermal power in respect of the Renewables Obligation; [28862]

(2) whether support for deep geothermal power will be included under the forthcoming Renewables Obligation. [28864]

Charles Hendry: Deep geothermal power is supported under the Renewables Obligation (RO) and receives 2 ROCs/MWh. A banding review of Renewables Obligation support for all technologies, including deep geothermal, began in October this year. This review will consider whether any changes are needed to the banding.

Geothermal Power: Ofgem

Stephen Gilbert: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent discussions his Department has had with Ofgem on deep geothermal power. [28859]

Charles Hendry: DECC has not had any recent discussions with Ofgem on deep geothermal power, which is an eligible technology under the RO. In continuing to encourage deep geothermal power the Department will raise issues with Ofgem as and when it becomes necessary.

Geothermal Power: Regulation

Stephen Gilbert: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change whether his Department has plans to introduce a regulatory regime for the development of deep geothermal power technology. [28860]

Charles Hendry: The practical and legal aspects of an exploration licensing scheme covering geothermal heat and power projects are currently under examination by DECC officials.

Natural Gas

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent estimate he has made of the potential contribution of shale gas to the UK's energy needs. [27751]

Charles Hendry *[holding answer 1 December 2010]:* The security of supply of gas is a top Government priority in the UK. Gas is fungible and DECC does not distinguish between types of gas consumed in the UK but instead aims to create an environment where there are incentives for investing in all viable forms of gas production. The energy security and green economy bill contains measures to strengthen the market incentive mechanism for ensuring sufficient gas is available.

The UK is already benefiting from the technological breakthroughs in unconventional gas production methods. Recent increases in shale gas production in the United States has reduced the US's demand for imports of LNG, freeing up this liquified natural gas to be imported by other countries such as the UK and helping to put downward pressure on wholesale gas prices.

Further increases in the global production of shale gas are expected. This may help the UK to meet its demand for gas either directly (i.e. by being consumed in the UK) or indirectly (i.e. by freeing up other gas resources for consumption by the UK).

The British Geological Survey estimates that there could be worthwhile shale gas resources in the UK. However it is not possible to make an estimate of reserves without drilling and production testing, and it is not yet clear that the success elsewhere can be replicated in the UK.

Near Zero Emissions Coal

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what *(a)* funding and *(b)* other support his Department has provided to the EU-China Near Zero Emissions Coal project. [28474]

Charles Hendry: The EU-China Near Zero Emissions Coal project (NZEC) has been planned as a three phase project. The UK led Phase I and provided £2.8 million to support workstreams that examined the potential for CO2 capture, transport and geological storage in China and the relative merits of a range of carbon capture and storage technologies. Phase I was delivered by 19 Chinese and nine UK partners representing academia, industry and research institutes and was completed in October 2009. Further information on can be found at:

http://www.nzec.info/en/

We are currently in discussion with European partners and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology over the terms of Phase IIa, which is being led by the European Commission, with the aim of enabling China to determine the type of demonstration that they would like to see and identify where that facility should be located. The UK has yet to make a financial contribution toward this phase of the project.

Radioactive Waste

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many meetings the Geological Disposal Implementation Board for Radioactive Waste has held; what the current membership is of the board; and if he will post on his Department's website a copy of each paper presented to the board. [28635]

Charles Hendry: The Government are committed to geological disposal of higher activity radioactive waste, coupled with safe and secure interim storage and a geological disposal facility siting process based on voluntarism and partnership.

The Geological Disposal Implementation Board (GDIB), which I chair, was set up to provide direct ministerial oversight of the implementation programme as well as enabling stakeholders to provide input to, or to have observation of, the programme. The board will meet two to three times per year and will provide increased visibility of the programme and make clear programme responsibilities and accountabilities.

The first meeting of this board took place on 30 November 2010 and a high-level timeline for the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely programme was presented to members. This describes the progress to date, as well as setting out indicative timescales and milestones in implementing geological disposal. The Government will keep the timeline and milestones under review and update them whenever required.

The GDIB terms of reference and a list of attending organisations are available on the Department's website at:

http://www.decc.gov.uk

Agendas, minutes and papers will also be published following each meeting.

Renewables Obligation: Biofuels

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change when he expects to make a decision on whether to grandfather bioliquids made from waste under the Renewables Obligation; and if he will make a statement. [28512]

Charles Hendry *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: The timing of decisions is now being considered. My officials will write shortly to the industry representatives contributing to this work to let them know the timescale.

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent representations he has received on the potential effect on the number of green jobs in the economy of any decision not to grandfather bioliquids made from waste under the Renewables Obligation. [28513]

Charles Hendry *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: The Government have not yet made a decision on whether to grandfather bioliquids under the Renewables Obligation (RO). In our response to the consultation on grandfathering biomass in the Renewables Obligation we committed to do further work on bioliquids derived from wastes. This work is currently being undertaken in discussion with the industry.

Twelve companies have made representations to the Government that jobs in this sector are dependent on investor certainty, which is in turn dependent on grandfathering RO support rates. These representations indicate that although some projects and companies may be significantly affected, the overall impact on green jobs is likely to be small. Nevertheless the Government are keen to promote both green jobs and energy from waste and are therefore considering the issue very carefully.

Wind Power

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many wind turbines are in operation at each location in each local authority area. [28464]

Charles Hendry: The following table lists the number of wind turbines by region and district in England, and by county in Wales and Scotland. This is drawn from a database commissioned by DECC (which is regularly updated but may not be fully comprehensive, particularly over the last month). We do not have a breakdown according to local authority area and it would be disproportionately expensive to provide this.

Number

Region	*District/ county*	*Wind farms*	*Wind turbines*
East midlands	Boston	1	13
	East Lindsey	6	38
	Kettering	1	10
	South Holland	2	12
	South Kesteven	1	1
	Unspecified	4	5
	Total	15	79
Eastern	Breckland	3	10
	Fenland	7	39
	Great Yarmouth	2	11
	Peterborough	1	3
	Uttlesford	1	1
	Waveney	2	2
	Unspecified	2	13
	Total	18	79
London	Unspecified	2	2
	Total	2	5
North-east	Castle Morpeth	1	3
	Derwentside	6	28
	Easington	2	3
	Hartlepool	1	3
	Sedgefield	1	7
	South Tyneside	1	1
	Stockton-on-Tees	2	4
	Wansbeck	2	16
	Wear Valley	1	4
	Unspecified	6	21

Number

Region	*District/county*	*Wind farms*	*Wind turbines*
	Total	23	90
North-west	Allerdale	9	66
	Barrow-in-Furness	1	7
	Blackpool	1	3
	Burnley	2	27
	Copeland	3	19
	Rossendale	1	26
	Sefton	2	10
	South Lakeland	3	22
	Unspecified	2	14
	Total	24	194
South-east	Dover	1	1
	Milton Keynes	2	8
	Reading	1	1
	Shepway	1	26
	Vale of White Horse	1	5
	Total	6	41
South-west	Carrick	2	30
	East Devon	1	1
	Kerrier	7	13
	Mendip	1	1
	North Cornwall	2	32
	North Wiltshire	1	1
	Restormel	1	16
	South Somerset	1	1
	Stroud	1	1
	Torridge	2	6
	Unspecified	2	4
	Total	21	106
West midlands	Malvern Hills	1	1
	Wychavon	1	1
	Unspecified	1	1
	Total	3	3
Yorkshire and Humber	Barnsley	1	13
	Calderdale	2	22
	Craven	2	8
	Doncaster	1	2
	East Riding of Yorkshire	5	22
	Harrogate	2	9
	Kirklees	3	5
	North Lincolnshire	1	8
	Rotherham	1	2
	Selby	1	12
	Unspecified	1	1
	Total	20	104
Scotland	Aberdeenshire	17	70
	Clackmannanshire	1	20
	Dundee City	1	2
	East Ayrshire	2	160
	East Lothian	2	18
	East Renfrewshire	2	4
	Highland	17	238
	Midlothian	1	24
	Moray	4	55
	North Ayrshire	2	18
	North Lanarkshire	1	2
	Orkney Islands	12	27
	Scottish Borders	10	235
	Shetland Islands	1	5
	South Ayrshire	1	52
	South Lanarkshire	7	132
	Stirling	3	58
	West Lothian	1	7
	Unspecified	25	335
	Total	110	1,462
Wales	Conwy	4	14
	Pembrokeshire	1	14
	Powys	13	277
	Unspecified	19	188
	Total	37	493

Wind Power: Planning Permission

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many wind farms are *(a)* in operation and *(b)* in construction; and how many applications for wind farms are awaiting planning permission. [28463]

Charles Hendry: Currently, there are 331 operational wind farms in the UK, of which 15 are offshore. There are a further 49 under construction, of which six are offshore. Some 168 wind farms are currently awaiting construction, of which three are offshore. And 257 are awaiting planning permission, of which six are offshore.

These figures are taken from the Renewable Energy Planning Database, which is available on the DECC website, and contains data on UK wind farm projects of 10 kW and above (including single turbine installations). The database is updated regularly though the figures provided may not reflect changes to project status that have occurred in the last month.

Wind Power: Research

Ms Bagshawe: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how much his Department has allocated to research which aims to improve the efficiency of wind turbines in the latest period for which figures are available; and how much funding he plans to allocate in each of the next three years. [28126]

Charles Hendry: The Department has allocated funding to research in two areas:

1. The Environmental Transformation Fund Offshore Wind Demonstration Call has allocated up to £27.08 million over three years (2009-12) into the demonstration of new technology for large multi-megawatt offshore turbines. (£8 million of this was from the DECC/BIS Dual Key Funding).

2. DECC has provided up to £4.8 million over two years (2009-11) to The Carbon Trust to support the Offshore Wind Accelerator, a programme funding various cost reduction technologies.

DECC has not decided on budget allocations in innovation for the next three year period as we need to undertake our normal business planning and Budget Committee process and that process will not be fully resolved until January/February 2011.

SCOTLAND

Alternative Vote: Scottish Parliament

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he has assessed the effects of holding a joint ballot for a referendum on the alternative vote and elections to the Scottish Parliament on those *(a)* with learning difficulties and *(b)* for whom English is not their first language. [28307]

David Mundell: Article 90 of the Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2010 allows returning officers to provide documents in different languages, in graphical representations, or in such ways as to make them more accessible to people who might otherwise not have reasonable access to information. The Parliamentary Voting Systems and Constituencies Bill includes a similar provision. In addition, the Electoral Commission will be sending an information booklet to all households explaining how to vote at both the Scottish Parliament election and the referendum. The Commission are working with the Central Office of Information to ensure that the public information they provide will be accessible. As part of that process they are considering the needs of people with learning disabilities and English as a second language.

Cancer: Drugs

Eric Joyce: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether the Scottish Government will receive a budgetary uplift as a consequence of the allocation of £50 million by the Government to the interim cancer drugs fund. [28803]

Michael Moore: In July 2010, the Secretary of State for Health, the right hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr Lansley), announced that from October patients will have greater access to cancer drugs that their doctors recommend for them due to an extra £50 million in funding being made available by the Department of Health. There are no new Barnett consequentials for the Scottish budget as a consequence of this policy.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28363]

David Mundell: Since the formation of the coalition Government, all Scotland Office expenditure, including expenditure on conferences, has been subject to the most rigorous scrutiny.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much his Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28147]

David Mundell: The Scotland Office came into existence on 1 July 1999. We do not hold centrally figures for 1999-2000. The figures for 2000-01 onwards are shown in the following table:

	£
2000-01	9,600.87
2001-02	7,073.67
2002-03	8,895.00
2003-04	18,215.25
2004-05	18,114.50
2005-06	16,500.00
2006-07	17,072.37
2007-08	12,150.59
2008-09	12,025
2009-10	10,245

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28374]

David Mundell: The Scotland Office does not separately record its expenditure on printing Command Papers, papers presented to Parliament by Act, consultation documents or any other papers. However, Scotland Office's total expenditure on printing for the last 10 years is shown in the following table:

	Expenditure (£)
2000-01[1]	10,482
2001-02[1]	12,012
2002-03	13,675
2003-04	8,655
2004-05	14,370
2005-06	8,847
2006-07	41,400
2007-08	17,596
2008-09	15,348

	Expenditure (£)
2009-10	20,467

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[1] In our earlier years, the costs of the Scotland Office were not discernable from those of the Office of the Advocate-General. Therefore, the costs shown for the first two years include the costs of both Offices.

Departmental Written Questions

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many and what proportion of questions tabled to the Secretary of State for written answer on a named day were answered substantively before or on the day named for answer *(a)* in Session 2009-10 and *(b)* since May 2010; how many such questions tabled between May 2010 and 12 November 2010 had not received a substantive answer by 18 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to his Department of answering a question for written answer on a named day on the day named for answer in the latest period for which figures are available. [25973]

David Mundell: Between May 2010 and 12 November 2010, 88 named day parliamentary questions were tabled to the Secretary of State for Scotland, my right hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk (Michael Moore). Of these, 79 (90%) were answered substantively on the day named for answer. All received a substantive answer by 18 November 2010.

The Government have committed to providing the Procedure Committee with sessional statistics in a standard format on the time taken to respond to written parliamentary questions for the 2009-10 Session. This information will be submitted to the Procedure Committee shortly.

HM Treasury conducts an annual indexation exercise of the cost of written and oral parliamentary questions so as to ensure that these average costs are increased in line with increases in underlying costs. The estimated cost of written questions that has applied from 20 January 2010 is £154.

Elections: Scotland

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland for what reasons he considers that there should be two separate electoral management boards for Scotland. [28306]

David Mundell: We do not consider that there should be two separate electoral management boards in Scotland.

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland for what reasons the laying of the draft Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2010 took place after the presentation of the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill. [28308]

David Mundell: This Government assumed responsibility for the Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2010 from the previous Administration and we made every effort to lay it as soon as practicable.

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assessment he has made of the nature of the operational relationship between the Government and Interim Electoral Management Board Scotland following its establishment as a statutory body. [28309]

David Mundell: The Interim Electoral Management Board for Scotland has not yet been established as a statutory body. Scotland Office officials attend meetings of the Board and we will continue to work closely with the Board on the forthcoming Scottish Parliament elections and reserved elections.

Local Government Ballots: Scottish Parliament

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland under what circumstances he expects a combination of Scottish Parliament and local government ballots to occur. [28310]

David Mundell: Under Article 13 of the Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2010, a local government by-election which takes place on the same date as a Scottish Parliament general election must be combined. If a Scottish Parliament by-election falls on the same date as a local government election, the returning officer, or returning officers if there are different returning officers for both elections, may combine them if they think fit.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Bees

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department has spent on research concerning bees in each of the last three years; and if she will make a statement. [26945]

Mr Paice: There are a number of funding routes for bee research in the UK and EU. Within these, DEFRA has spent the following on research concerning honey bees in each of the last three years:

Financial year	£
2008-09	360,000
2009-10	498,000
2010-11[1]	632,000

[1] The figure for 2010-11 includes the £500,000 per year that DEFRA is contributing to the Insect Pollinators Initiative over the next five years which includes research on both honey and bumble bees. The Insect Pollinators Initiative is a £10 million programme established in 2009 to support research to better understand the importance of, threats to and management needs for insect pollinators in the UK. Although much of the funding is directed to honey bee research, there are some research projects on bumblebee ecology or on insect pollinators in general.

The amounts in the table cover a number of different projects, some of which have been completed. Final reports for the completed projects are available on the DEFRA website. Details of the projects funded under the Insect Pollinators Initiative are available on the Living with Environmental Change website.

DEFRA and Natural England have provided additional research funding, amounting to between £6,000 and £22,000 in each of the last three years, on understanding the status and ecology of rare and declining wild bee species.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the bee population in England was on 1 March *(a)* 2000 and *(b)* 2010. [26946]

Mr Paice: Specific data on the honey bee population on 1 March 2000 and 2010 are not available. The population varies during the year from around 20,000 per colony in the winter to 60,000 per colony in the summer. A study carried out by ADAS Consulting Ltd. in 2001 estimated that there were 230,000 managed honey bee colonies in England. No subsequent estimates have been made. However, the National Bee Unit, part of the Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera), has a voluntary database on which 18,878 beekeepers managing 102,172 colonies in England are currently registered.

In addition to the honey bee, there are many species of wild bee in our countryside, a number of which have been the focus of UK conservation action. Information on the distribution and status of wild bees is available through the websites of voluntary groups such as the Bumblebee Conservation Trust or the Bees, Wasps and Ants Recording Society or from the Government-supported National Biodiversity Network Gateway which is an on-line database of information on the distribution of wildlife in the UK.

Dairy Farming

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* supermarket retailers and *(b)* the farming industry on the sustainability of the dairy farming industry; [27428]

(2) what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* supermarket retailers and *(b)* the farming industry on the pricing of milk, cheese and yoghurt; [27429]

(3) what her policy is on changes in the *(a)* level of imports and *(b)* share of the domestic market of domestic suppliers of milk, cheese and yoghurt. [27430]

Mr Paice: On 6 July, I chaired the Dairy Supply Chain Forum which brought together representatives from throughout the supply chain and included discussions on the impacts of price volatility and the sustainability of the dairy industry.

On 16 December, I will be chairing the next meeting of the Dairy Supply Chain Forum to discuss current issues and concerns.

I am determined to help the UK dairy industry increase its share of the domestic milk and milk products markets accounted for by domestic suppliers.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28113]

Richard Benyon: The Department complies with the UK and EU procurement directives and publishes requirements on websites such as CompeteFour and Supply-to-Gov in the expectation that small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations will see and respond to the procurement need.

All procurement processes allow for the minimum of effort by the potential supplier to ensure that there are no obstacles that prevent small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations from responding.

In line with Government policy we cannot show favour to any type of supplier in the final procurement selection processes. If the requirements could be met by a third sector organisation, the Department will include this point at the pre-procurement stage when details are published.

Environment Agency

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what factors she plans to take into account in determining whether the Environment Agency's navigations will transfer to the charitable body proposed to be established by April 2012 to operate the British Waterways inland waterways network; and if she will make a statement. [28645]

Richard Benyon *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: In considering whether or not to transfer the Environment Agency's navigations into the new waterways charity, we are taking into account: the contribution this could make to our vision of a national trust for the waterways in civil society; the views of stakeholders; operational management practicalities, and affordability in relation to the need for the charity to have cover for future liabilities.

We are looking at a number of different options and will consult on our proposals as part of our planned consultation on the new waterways charity early next year.

Farming Futures

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what representations she received prior to making her decision to terminate funding for Farming Futures in the next financial year; and if she will make a statement; [27420]

(2) what recent representations she has received on her decision to end funding for Farming Futures. [27422]

Mr Paice: Farming Futures is a communications project that aims to raise awareness and inform farmers of the impacts of climate change and the actions that can be adopted. Funded by DEFRA, it is a partnership of key agricultural organisations comprising the National Farmers Union, Country Land and Business Association, Agricultural Industries Confederation, Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, and Linking Environment and Farming.

In December 2009, Farming Futures and the industry partners were informed that DEFRA could no longer provide the financial support after four years of core funding. It had always been envisaged that the funding would be time-limited, allowing Farming Futures enough time with which to seek alternative long-term financial support. Informal representations were received from project partners following the decision to end funding for Farming Futures.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish her impact assessment in respect of the rural *(a)* economy and *(b)* environment of her Department's decision to terminate funding for Farming Futures in the next financial year; and if she will make a statement. [27424]

Mr Paice: Since the launch of the Farming Futures communications project in 2007, DEFRA has provided significant core funding. This contribution has allowed Farming Futures to establish themselves in playing a central role in supporting the farming industry organisations to take action on climate change. This includes raising awareness and informing farmers of the actions that can be taken to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate.

It has always been envisaged that funding from Government would be time-limited, allowing Farming Futures enough time with which to seek alternative long-term financial support. To effect behaviour change within the sector, the farming industry organisations need to play a bigger role to ensure that key messages are delivered to farmers and that action is taken to tackle the effects of climate change. Therefore, no formal impact assessment has been undertaken.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish her Department's assessments of the value for money delivered by Farming Futures in each of the last four financial years; and if she will make a statement. [27427]

Mr Paice: In 2007 Farming Futures was launched to raise awareness of the impacts of climate change on farming. Overall, in that year, a good network of media contacts and direct links with farmers and farming organisations was developed, achieving a £157,000 advertising value equivalent.

Since 2008, the focus of Farming Futures expanded further to include effecting behaviour change, and information was provided (through fact sheets, case studies, workshops etc.) to enable farmers to take the necessary action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate. As part of the evaluation of the each phase of the project, a survey was undertaken to assess the level of success achieved. We will ensure that the results of these surveys are made readily available on the Farming Futures website:

http://www.farmingfutures.org.uk

Farming: Climate Change

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding her Department plans to provide to the farming industry for the purposes of tackling climate change in each of the next four financial years; and what mechanism she plans to use to *(a)* disburse and *(b)* monitor the effectiveness of such funding. [27423]

Mr Paice: Climate change is a key priority for this Government, and as with all sectors of the economy, the agriculture sector will need to play its role in tackling greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the changing climate.

In England, the farming industry has taken responsibility for reducing emissions from agriculture through the development of a Greenhouse Gas Action Plan, for which a Framework for Action was published in February. This approach was supported by the previous administration and this Government continue to encourage the industry to work in partnership to achieve significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions. We look forward to the publication of a delivery plan in the near future.

The Government have made a significant investment of £12.6 million over four and half years, in partnership with the devolved Administrations, in a series of projects that aim to strengthen our collective understanding of on-farm emissions, allowing for better targeting of actions and capturing improvements made in livestock and crop management practices. We will also ensure Carbon Trust interest-free loans are available to farm businesses to invest in energy-saving equipment.

Farmers and land managers are also vulnerable to the effects of climate change and will need to take action to adapt sustainably. The Government are looking at enhancing existing advice and guidance arrangements to support voluntary adaptation action. DEFRA also undertakes research on the impact on climate change in the farming sector; future funding will depend on the specific projects undertaken.

We will support the sector through the development of training packages to deliver integrated advice, which will cover both mitigation and adaptation objectives.

Funding is currently available for farmers under the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) to address challenges including climate change. For example, Environmental Stewardship provides farmers with a range of management options that are able to deliver multiple objectives, including climate change mitigation and adaption benefits. Climate change was embedded as an over-arching theme into Environmental Stewardship following the 2008 Review of Progress. An evaluation of the RDPE is currently under way and we look forward to its findings on the effectiveness of the programme which will be available early in 2011.

Flood Control

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which flood defence projects in each constituency are awaiting financial approval by the Environment Agency. [26191]

Richard Benyon *[holding answer 24 November 2010]*: All flood defence projects already under construction will be completed. It is too early to identify individual new flood defence projects that will be funded during the coming spending period. This is partly because annual budgets are still being finalised. It is also because the way in which Government funding is allocated to projects, and who decides which projects go ahead, may be changing.

DEFRA launched a public consultation on 24 November seeking views on how capital funding should be allocated to individual projects in the future. Subject to final decisions in the spring, the new approach could apply to all projects seeking funds to begin construction from April 2012 onwards.

The proposed approach would mark a departure from the existing system in that the Environment Agency would no longer decide the list of projects that go ahead, and which others need to be deferred as a result of annual limits in Government funding. Instead such decisions in most cases would be devolved to local authorities acting collectively as part of Regional Flood Defence Committees (to become Regional Flood and Coastal Committees under the Flood and Water Management Act). The approach also rewards public bodies and communities if they find ways of keeping project costs down, as well as if they can find additional local funding to come forward. In doing so, each community at risk could have a bigger say in which projects go ahead over time.

Whichever means of capital allocation is adopted, DEFRA expects that improved standards of protection will be delivered to 145,000 households by March 2015.

Flood Control: Finance

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department *(a)* allocated for expenditure on flood defences in each of the last five years and *(b)* plans to allocate to expenditure on flood defences in each of the next five years. [27986]

Richard Benyon: The following table sets out the amounts allocated for expenditure on flood and coastal erosion risk management for the last five years, including how much is provided to the Environment Agency as grant.

£ million

	Total	*Funding to Environment Agency*	*Other expenditure, including to local authorities*
2010-11[1]	664	629	35
2009-10	627.9	607.4	20.5
2008-09	572.4	568.4	4
2007-08	499.8	499.8	0
2006-07	505.2	[2]497.3	7.9

[1] The figures for 2010-11 are estimates of expenditure.

[2] £497.3 million for 2006-07 includes funding allocated by DEFRA which in later years was administered by the Environment Agency.

DEFRA expects to spend at least £2.1 billion on flooding and coastal erosion over the next four years. Annual budgets are yet to be finalised. It is not possible to speculate about funding in 2015-16 because this is outside the current spending review period.

The Department for Communities and Local Government also provides funding to local authorities using formula grant: this is not included in these figures.

Forestry Commission: Land

Tristram Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to launch the public consultation on the sale of Forestry Commission land. [28476]

Mr Paice: We currently anticipate that the consultation on options for different models of ownership and management arrangements for the public forest estate will begin early next year.

Timber: EC Law

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress her Department has made towards the 2013 deadline for implementation of EU regulations on the importation of illegally-sourced timber; and if she will make a statement. [27731]

Mr Paice: We are implementing the Illegal Timber (Due Diligence) Regulation to meet our goal of eliminating illegal timber from the EU market; this will prohibit the import of illegally-harvested timber. When these additional implementing regulations have been finalised, a robust and proportionate domestic enforcement regime, including criminal penalties, will be put in place.

INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENTARY STANDARDS AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Managers: Pay

Mr Winnick: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, when the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) plans to provide a substantive answer to question 25196 on the responsibilities and salaries of members of the IPSA's senior management team. [27943]

Mr Charles Walker: A substantive answer to the hon. Member's question was provided on 3 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 1076W.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Churches: Rural Areas

Miss McIntosh: To ask the hon. Member for Banbury, representing the Church Commissioners, what recent representations he has received on the work of the Church of England in rural parishes; and if he will make a statement. [28453]

Tony Baldry: The Commissioners have received no direct representations. However, the Church of England has a presence in almost every rural settlement and village in England and plays an important and intricate role in rural community life. The Church of England manages 9,639 buildings in rural areas which are often the only space left open for the use of the community. Clergy undertaking rural ministry are receive support from the Diocese Rural Officer and specific training for rural ministry is available through our partners at the Arthur Rank Centre and the Churches Rural Resources Centre in Warwickshire.

In rural areas parishes are often grouped together into multi-parish benefices or team ministries which can range in number from two to five parishes to 17 to 24 in which usually an ordained minister is assisted by voluntary workers to ensure that within each parish worship and pastoral care is provided appropriately. The committed ministry of volunteers, particularly from within local congregations, is essential to sustaining and extending the work of the church in rural parishes. Recently we have focused on developing the skills and gifts of rural congregation members which has allowed rural churches to explore new ways of ensuring regular worship and a high standard of pastoral care and outreach in rural communities. Stress in clergy particularly those with charge of several parishes is of great concern to the church. Clergy are encouraged to take appropriate time off and to use the services of spiritual directors. Continued training is provided throughout ministry to enable new challenges to be addressed, and specialised training is available for those in working in multi-church situations.

The Church of England is undertaking to make its buildings available for wider extended community use, including as post offices, shops, libraries, internet cafes, benefit advice centres and citizens advice centres. Wherever possible, we want to see churches as living buildings where as much community activity as possible takes place, and the Church Commissioners will always support such activity. At the recent 'Faith in the Future of the Countryside' conference members of the Church of England discussed the Government's latest plans for the 'Big Society', development and housing in the countryside and the future of the government forests with several of our ecumenical partners. The conference urged the Church to engage with sustainable communities in its work on the 'Big Society' ensuring the safeguarding of ecological, cultural, economic and spiritual benefits which are already evident in the work of the Church in local communities.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Abortion

Mr Amess: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what material relating to the passage of the *(a)* Abortion Bill [*Lords*] 1965-66 Session, *(b)* Abortion Bill [*Lords*] 1966-67 Session, *(c)* Medical Termination of Pregnancy Bill 1966-67 Session and *(d)* Abortion (No. 2) Bill 1966-67 Session is stored in the Parliamentary Archives; and if he will make a statement. [28005]

John Thurso: Details of records held by the Parliamentary Archives can be found by searching its online catalogue, Portcullis at:

www.portcullis.parliament.uk

A list of records relating to the above Bills will be deposited in the Library of the House. The records themselves can be ordered to, and consulted in, the Archives' public search room on the second floor of the House of Lords.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, how much the House of Commons service spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28158]

John Thurso: Payments by the House of Commons' service for press cuttings services have been as follows.

Media and Communications Service:

For coverage of the work of select committees and the House in general.

	£
2007-08	8,502
2008-09	22,028
2009-10	63,649
2010-11 (to date)	48,281

Select Committees:

Some committees purchase a service with a wider remit to inform them of developments in their subject areas.

	£
2007-08	27,289
2008-09	25,646
2009-10	16,457
2010-11 (to date)	8,301

Detailed financial records from which this information can be derived are not kept for earlier periods.

A reduction in this expenditure of £35,000 a year has been proposed by the Management Board as a contribution to the savings target set by the commission.

Parliamentary Archives: Publications

Mr Amess: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what material offered to the Parliamentary Archives was rejected in each of the last 11 years; what the reason for rejection was in each case; and if he will make a statement. [28012]

John Thurso: The acquisition of records — both internal and external — by the Parliamentary Archives is governed by its "Collection & Acquisition Policy", available from its public searchroom and on the parliamentary website at:

http://www.parliament.uk/documents/upload/archivesacquisitionpolicy09.pdf

The disposal of the internal records of the administrations of both Houses is governed by its records management procedures, specifically the "Authorised Records Disposal Practice" (ARDP), available on the parliamentary intranet at:

http://intranet.parliament.uk/research-online/records-archives/records-management/ardp/

Destruction of records no longer of business or historical value takes place within individual offices as a matter of routine, based on the instructions in the above schedules. Records immediately identifiable as of historic value are automatically transferred to the Archives in accordance with the ARDP. Where it is not clear whether a business record has historic value or not, that record is "appraised" by the Archives, a procedure which has been used since 2004 when the ARDP was introduced.

The numbers of files selected or rejected by the Parliamentary Archives following appraisal is in the following table:

	Files selected	*Files not selected*
2004	69	155
2005	865	657
2006	142	353
2007	190	189
2008	19	17
2009	151	56
2010 (Provisional figures)	97	112

Appraisal decisions are based on a number of factors, including the record's provenance and content; authenticity and reliability; order and completeness; condition and costs to preserve it; and its intrinsic value (where appropriate). Reasons for rejection include: information already published; duplicate information held elsewhere; is of a routine administrative nature that does not add value or understanding to other related records; or does not fit with the collecting themes in the "Collection & Acquisition Policy". It would incur disproportionate cost to collate and publish all information related to these appraisal decisions. However, the relevant files containing these decisions can be made available for consultation in the Archives' searchroom on request.

A record is not kept of speculative offers received from external sources but not pursued, which are few in number. Details are only kept of the acquisition of an external record or collection once a decision to acquire has been made; a decision based on the criteria set out in the "Collection & Acquisition Policy".

Portcullis House

Joan Walley: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what recent risk assessment has been undertaken in respect of the tiled floors in bathroom and shower wet room facilities in Portcullis House; and if he will make a statement. [27775]

John Thurso: There is no record of a formal risk assessment having been undertaken in respect of the bathrooms and shower room facilities in Portcullis House. However, it is understood that staff reviewed the operation of these spaces shortly after the building opened and noted that there was a risk of users with wet, bare feet slipping on the floor. Bath mats are therefore provided.

Portcullis House: Fire Escapes

Joan Walley: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what recent risk assessment has been undertaken of fire safety procedures in Portcullis House in respect of signposting to stairways; and if he will make a statement. [27720]

John Thurso: Following the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 a fire risk assessment of Portcullis House was carried out in 2006. This assessment deals, among other things, with signposting. A periodic review of the fire risk assessment has been carried out each year since 2006. A further periodic review is due to be carried out during December 2010.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Alternative Vote: Referendums

Tom Greatrex: To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, whether the ballot papers for the *(a)* proposed referendum on the alternative vote and *(b)* elections to the Scottish Parliament in 2010 have been tested for acceptability to voters by the Electoral Commission. [28303]

Mr Streeter: The Electoral Commission has informed me that the designs for the ballot papers for the proposed referendum on the voting system for UK parliamentary elections and the Scottish Parliament elections are prescribed in legislation introduced by the UK Government.

The Commission has not undertaken user-testing of the design of the ballot paper for the proposed referendum, although it undertook extensive user-testing research on the wording of the question that will appear on the ballot paper as part of its assessment of the question to be asked at the referendum.

The Commission has further informed me that it has not undertaken user-testing on the design of ballot papers for the Scottish Parliament elections, although it has made recommendations to the Scotland Office that it should undertake user-testing of the proposed designs in line with the Commission's "Making your mark" guidance.

Tom Greatrex: To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what assessment the Electoral Commission has made of the compliance with its guidelines of the ballot papers for the *(a)* referendum on the alternative vote and *(b)* elections to the Scottish Parliament in 2010 in respect of those with visual impairments. [28305]

Mr Streeter: The Electoral Commission has informed me that it published design guidance ('Making your mark') for policy-makers aimed at improving the usability and accessibility of voter materials, including ballot papers, in October 2009. The "Making your mark" guidance is aimed at addressing a wide range of voters' needs, including the needs of voters with visual impairments, and was developed with input from accessibility and disability awareness groups including the RNIB.

The Commission highlighted in its briefing for parliamentarians at second reading of the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill its concern that the prescribed forms for voters, including the ballot paper for the proposed referendum on changing the voting system for UK parliamentary elections, had not been designed in accordance with the "Making your mark" guidance. The Bill has since been amended to allow the Chief Counting Officer to specify changes to certain forms to improve the accessibility of the voting process, but this would not extend to the design of the ballot paper.

The Commission has further informed me that it recommended, in response to the UK Government's consultation on the draft Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2010, that the design of the ballot paper should be revised in line with its "Making your mark" guidance and user-tested to ensure it could be easily understood by the electorate.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Africa: Agriculture

Heidi Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in African states on the commitment to spend 10 per cent. of GDP on agriculture made at Maputo in 2003. [28030]

Mr O'Brien: The Secretary of State and I routinely discuss factors affecting economic growth and food security whenever we meet our African counterparts. UK Government officials also participate in twice yearly meetings of the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme. We use these meetings, and our country level work, to review the programme with the African Union and member states, and urge progress towards the Maputo productivity and expenditure targets.

Agriculture: Research

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions his Department has had on replenishment of funding for the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. [27920]

Mr O'Brien: The UK is a founding member and among the top four donors of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). In 2009-10 the Department for International Development (DFID) contributed about 8% of the total CGIAR budget and has been leading a change process that is bringing about far reaching reform of the organisation.

DFID has held discussions with a range of external stakeholders, including UK-resident CGIAR Centre Board Chairs and Members, bilateral donors, the European Commission (EC), the European Initiative for Agricultural Research for Development (EIARD), National Research and Extension Systems (NARES), the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR), the World Bank (WB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) on how best to harmonise funding for greater research focus on priority issues of climate change, poverty, food security and nutrition.

The reformed CGIAR has established a global trust fund governed by a Fund Council, on which DFID has a seat. The Council will make funding allocations to priority research programmes proposed by the Consortium of CGIAR Centres. From this financial year onwards DFID's contribution will go directly to the CGIAR Fund rather than to specific Centres and programmes as has been the case in the past.

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to support *(a)* agricultural research and *(b)* extension needs in respect of the very poorest and most marginalised smallholder farmers in the developing world. [27921]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) focuses its agricultural research on priority issues related to agriculture and natural resource management for poor people and smallholders.

The current agriculture research portfolio is built around four main components: providing core support to international research to deliver high quality and effective international public goods to tackle poverty reduction and achieve sustainable growth; getting the outcomes of research into widespread use, through national research and extension systems (NARES), non-governmental organisations, the private sector and other partnerships; investing in regional research programmes based in Africa and South Asia; and working in partnerships to take forward advanced research in order to address major research objectives of relevance to poor people, such as climate change, new pests and diseases. This involves targeting and harnessing scientific excellence, and linking this to global partners.

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions his Department has had on the role of UK institutions and non-governmental organisations in meeting the need for research tailored to the needs of the most marginal smallholder farmers. [27922]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has recently discussed and agreed a new programme of research with the UK Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC). This programme aims to develop crop varieties which are drought and disease resistant, as well as new production methods relevant to smallholders in Sub-Saharan African and South Asia.

DFID has also engaged in promoting the potential role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in scaling up vitamin enriched crops in Africa. This process has included discussions on the role of NGOs in working with smallholders to select new crop varieties relevant to their needs, and the widespread dissemination of a new vaccine for East Coast Fever in East Africa.

At the 2010 Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD), officials also discussed the research and extension priorities of smallholders and marginalised farmers in developing countries with a wide range of stakeholders. A roadmap was developed that lays out priority actions to improve the participation of marginal smallholder farmers in research and extension work.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28360]

Mr Duncan: In accordance with the cross-government freeze on marketing and advertising spend, all conferences paid for by the Department for International Development (DFID) are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. This process assesses the business case for the conference, the value for money and potential cost saving opportunities for each conference we fund.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts, in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28109]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) currently advertises all contracts over the value of £101,000, a threshold set by the EU, on the European Journal website as well as on the DFID website. Suppliers are chosen on the basis of a competitive bidding process. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and third sector organisations can access these opportunities by expressing their interest in these adverts.

In order to improve access to DFID contracts for all suppliers, DFID is in the process of launching a supplier portal. The portal will allow suppliers to register their company information (including whether they are an SME or third sector organisation), view opportunities that DFID is currently tendering and receive automated alerts of competitions in their markets of interest. We plan to launch this new facility, which will be available free of charge, in early 2011. Further information and updates can be found on the procurement pages of DFID's website:

www.dfid.gov.uk

Departmental Manpower

Heidi Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how many of his Department's staff at each grade *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* at each overseas office are working on agriculture programmes; [28031]

(2) how many staff at each grade based *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* at each overseas office have agricultural training; [28032]

(3) how many of his Department's staff at each grade based *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* at each overseas office have agricultural experience. [28033]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development supports numerous and diverse programmes addressing food security or agricultural development, involving many staff from a range of professional backgrounds. To determine the extent of agricultural related training and experience among all these staff would incur disproportionate cost.

However, I can confirm DFID has two Senior Civil Service positions and a group of professional livelihoods advisers (currently 57) who are required to have specific expertise and experience in agricultural or rural development, food security, agricultural adaptation to climate change and related livelihoods issues. They must have a minimum of five years relevant experience and a higher degree in a relevant subject. The numbers of livelihoods staff employed at each civil service grade and their location are provided in the following table.

Number of livelihoods advisers	*DFID grade (Traditional Civil Service grade)*	*Location*	
2	Senior Civil Service	UK	2
22	A1 (G6)	UK	11
		Overseas	7
		EC/UN	4
34	A2 (G7)	UK	10
		Overseas	23
		EC	1
1	A2L (SEO)	Overseas	1

Heidi Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many agricultural staff his Department plans to recruit at each grade in the next 12 months; and in which country each will be based. [28034]

Mr O'Brien: The UK Government have committed to spend £1.1 billion on food security and agricultural development between 2009-10 and December 2012, through a combination of support for agricultural research, bilateral programmes and multilateral contributions. The number and deployment of staff resources required to deliver this commitment, including any recruitment needs, will be determined by the outcome of the ongoing reviews of the Department for International Development's (DFID's) bilateral, multilateral, policy and research programmes. Recruitment is also subject to the current freeze and guidelines on external recruitment to the civil service.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28145]

Mr Duncan: The requested information cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost. For details of expenditure in the last 12 months for which figures are available, I refer my hon. Friend to my answer of 23 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 227W.

Developing Countries: Climate Change

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will take steps to encourage multilateral development banks to provide further support for investment and lending for the purposes of adaptation to climate change. [28018]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) is working closely with all the multilateral development banks (MDBs) to ensure a clear results framework for all their activities, including climate adaptation, and to help the MDBs to build their understanding of, and capacity to deliver, good adaptation projects and outcomes. Recent replenishment negotiations between DFID and the MDBs will help to provide resources to further climate-related investment and lending to the poorest countries, including for adaptation. Further details of funding committed to the MDBs will be available on the conclusion of the Multilateral Aid Review.

Developing Countries: Health Services

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to answer of 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 389-90W, on developing countries: health services, by what means his Department plans to support the World Health Organisation to help countries implement the recommendations of the World Health Report. [28227]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has agreed to provide technical assistance to support the World Health Organisation (WHO) in implementing the World Health Report. The technical assistance will be in the form of a senior health economist seconded by DFID for two years. DFID is also evaluating proposals to provide additional financial resources.

These resources will be used to provide direct assistance to developing countries wishing to implement pro-poor health financing reforms. The WHO is anticipating a large increase in demand for this type of assistance following the recent publication of the World Health Report, and has approached DFID for this support due to our well-proven and valued track record of providing assistance in this area.

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what *(a)* financial, *(b)* advisory and *(c)* training assistance his Department provides to foreign countries to support the provision of health care free at the point of use through each (i) project and (ii) funding stream; what plans he has to evaluate the outputs and outcomes of that work; and if he will make a statement. [28228]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) is currently providing considerable support to a number of developing countries to enable them to provide some health services free at the point of delivery. These countries currently include Uganda, Zambia, Ghana, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Malawi and Nepal. The type of support depends on the circumstances of the country concerned and may include budget support (Ghana, Uganda and Malawi), contributions to pooled funds (Liberia), project funding (Sierra Leone and Burundi) and technical assistance (all of these countries).

DFID is monitoring the impact of these reforms by tracking levels of key service outputs, such as outpatient attendances and the number of babies delivered in health centres. We are also assessing the extent to which changes in these outputs are contributing to improved health outcomes for poor and vulnerable people.

DFID is currently reviewing all its aid programmes, including our support to the health sector, to ensure UK aid is effective, accelerates progress towards the millennium development goals and represents value for money. Details of DFID's future support to the health sector in our partner countries will be available on the conclusion of the Bilateral and Multilateral Aid Reviews early next year.

Developing Countries: Politics and Government

Dr Thérèse Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what consideration he has given to the merits of using a proportion of development aid to improve institutional governance of *(a)* tax authorities and *(b)* other authorities in developing countries. [28069]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) recognises the importance of better governance for poverty reduction and long-term development. We are strongly committed to building effective public authorities, particularly in conflict-affected and fragile countries where capacity is often weak. This includes supporting citizens to demand more transparent and accountable government and improved service delivery.

Effective tax systems are at the heart of DFID's priorities to promote wealth creation, to build public accountability, and to enable the eventual "exit strategy from aid". Work in this area has delivered real and measurable results, generating significant additional resources for frontline basic services such as schools and primary healthcare. For example, DFID assistance to the Tanzania Revenue Authority helped increase the tax take from 12% of GDP in 2006 to 14.5% by 2007-08. In Uganda our support also contributed to additional revenue of £80 million over the period 2005-09.

Overseas Aid

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which 10 non-governmental organisations received the highest levels of funding from his Department in the latest period for which figures are available; what restrictions were placed on the use of such funds in each case; and if he will make a statement. [28008]

Mr O'Brien: The 10 non-governmental organisations (NGO) that received the highest levels of funding from the Department for International Development (DFID) in financial year 2009-10 are as follows.

NGO	*Total (£000)*
British Red Cross	39,611
VSO	34,124
International Rescue Committee UK (IRC)	26,400

NGO	*Total (£000)*
Save The Children	25,551
OXFAM	23,646
Christian Aid	17,043
CARE International UK	12,005
International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)	7,426
Overseas Development Institute	7,324
BBC World Service Trust	7,315

These NGOs have received this support through a variety of different DFID funding mechanisms. Details of the conditions attached to all funding to this group cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost. However, further details of all DFID projects, including those delivered by NGOs, can be found on the project database on DFID's website.

Each of DFID's funding channels for NGOs has different criteria and a specific application process. However once funding has been agreed there are a number of conditions that DFID applies to all NGOs. For example, they are required to provide quarterly financial reports, a copy of their annual audited accounts and annual reports detailing progress made against agreed objectives. Funds can only be used to support activities and objectives agreed with DFID. All NGOs are also required to produce a project evaluation and project completion reports.

The UK Government are introducing a new Aid Transparency Guarantee, which commits us to making our aid fully transparent to citizens in both the UK and developing countries, increasing accessibility and feedback, and pushing our international partners to follow our lead. Under this guarantee, DFID will publish full and detailed information on all funded projects and programmes on the DFID website in a standardised, accessible format so that this information can be freely used by third parties.

Philippines: Overseas Aid

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which non-governmental organisations based in the UK receive financial support from his Department for activities in the Philippines; and if he will make a statement. [27967]

Mr Duncan: Through our centrally-funded civil society programme, the Department for International Development (DFID) currently supports Anti-Slavery International's work in the Philippines to prevent child labour and to protect, release and rehabilitate child workers and children at risk.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid his Department allocated to the Philippines in each category in each year since 2000; and how much aid in each category it plans to allocate in 2011. [27978]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) has no plans to allocate bilateral aid to the Philippines in 2011. In recent years the Philippines has received aid from DFID in response to humanitarian emergencies; from centrally funded projects by UK civil society organisations; to finalise projects dating from the 1990s under the Aid and Trade Provision; and through the Heads of Mission Small Projects Scheme.

Details of DFID's bilateral aid spending in the Philippines can be found in the annual publication Statistics on International Development, which is available on the DFID website and in the Library of the House. Figures for 2000-01 to 2009-10 are reproduced in the following table.

£000

Funding type	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*	*2006-10*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Humanitarian assistance	250	50			309	91	300			2,271
Multilateral organisation										
Not for profit organisation	206	79	199	119	147	163	181	299	13	
Other bilateral aid	340	149	122	263	198	37				
Other financial aid	241	3,855	789	1,606	945	1,883	143	12	-5	-2
Procurement of goods and services		14	67	55	22	10		11	12	9
Total	1,037	4,147	1,177	2,043	1,621	2,185	624	321	20	2,278

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Afghanistan: Equality

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Afghanistan on the implementation of provisions on the recognition of equal treatment of men and women in the Afghan Constitution. [28518]

Alistair Burt: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said to the House on 27 October,

> "It is right to draw attention to the role of women in Afghan society and the importance of continuing to build it up in the future."

Our embassy officials in Kabul continue to press the Afghan Government to implement its national and international human rights commitments, including on the equal treatment of women and men.

We continue to provide support to the Afghan Government's Human Rights Support Unit, which opened on 29 September 2010, and to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. These two institutions play a key role in ensuring that the human rights of all Afghans are promoted and protected.

Burma: Prisoners

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his international counterparts on the imprisonment of Min Ko Naing in Burma. [28872]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience in Burma remains one of the international community's long-standing demands. The UK was instrumental in ensuring that Min Ko Naing and other high profile political prisoners were specifically mentioned in the UN Human Rights Council resolution on Burma in March this year and the UN General Assembly 3rd Committee resolution on the human rights situation in Burma in November.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Member for Richmond, Yorks (Mr Hague) discussed the issue of over 2,200 people still imprisoned for their political beliefs in Burma most recently with the Thai Foreign Minister on 29 November. My hon. Friend the Minister for Europe, the Member for Aylesbury (Mr Lidington) also raised our concern with EU Foreign Ministers at the Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels on 22 November.

The Government will continue to press for the release of Min Ko Naing and all other prisoners of conscience in Burma.

Departmental Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent estimate he has made of the number of questions to his Department tabled in the *(a)* House of Commons and *(b)* House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [28494]

Mr Lidington: In the House of Commons, 28 questions out of a total of 789 tabled for ordinary written answer in this session up to 12 November 2010 took longer than 10 sitting days to answer and were also tabled to more than one Department. The reasons for the delay in answering will have varied for each question.

In the House of Lords, no questions tabled for written answer in this session up to 12 November 2010 took longer than 10 sitting days to answer and were also tabled to more than one Department.

Government Hospitality: Wines

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will review his decision not to publish the entries in the Government wine cellar database to take into account the determination of the Information Commissioner on the application of commercial confidentiality criteria to a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, reference FS50277632. [26389]

Alistair Burt: I can confirm that in light of the determination of the Information Commissioner, I will be reviewing the decision not to publish some details of the Government wine cellar's database.

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from which wine *(a)* merchants and *(b)* producers his Department has purchased wine since his appointment. [26873]

Mr Bellingham *[holding answer 29 November 2010]*: Between 14 May and 23 November 2010, Government Hospitality purchased wines by the following merchants: Lea & Sandeman; John Armit Wines Ltd; Waitrose; Lay & Wheeler; Haynes Hanson & Clark; Jereboams; Berry Bros & Rudd; O. W. Loeb & Co. Ltd and Averys. It was sourced by the merchants from producers in the following countries: France, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa.

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many requests his Department has received since his appointment to publish a copy of the entries in the Government wine cellar database. [26875]

Mr Bellingham *[holding answer 29 November 2010]*: One, which was from the hon. Member.

Kashmir

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the government of Pakistan and *(b)* the government of India on the future of Kashmir. [28423]

Alistair Burt: Officials in our high commissions in Islamabad and New Delhi regularly discuss India-Pakistan relations, including Kashmir, with the Governments of Pakistan and India. However the long-standing position of the UK is that it is for Pakistan and India to find a lasting resolution to the situation in Kashmir, one which takes into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to mediate in finding one. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary reiterated this in the Foreign Affairs debate on 27 May and during his visit to Pakistan in June.

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* the political situation in Kashmir and *(b)* prospects for the future of Kashmir; and if he will make a statement. [28424]

Alistair Burt: Officials in our high commissions in New Delhi and Islamabad closely monitor the situation in Indian and Pakistan administered Kashmir. They regularly discuss the situation with the Governments of India and Pakistan and make clear our hope that they can make progress on the issue. We welcome the efforts that both sides are making towards constructive dialogue. However the long-standing position of the UK is that it is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting resolution to the situation in Kashmir, one which takes into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to mediate in finding one. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary reiterated this in the Foreign Affairs debate on 27 May and during his visit to Pakistan in June.

We continue to call for an improvement in the human rights situation on both sides of the Line of Control and for an end to external support for violence in Kashmir. UK funding supports human rights, conflict prevention and peace building efforts on both sides of the Line of Control.

Middle East: Armed Conflict

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on the acquisition of anti-aircraft missiles by Hamas; what discussions he has had with the Government of Israel on this issue; and if he will make a statement. [28485]

Alistair Burt: The UK regularly discusses the issue of arms smuggling with the Israeli Government. The details of these discussions are confidential. However, the UK continues to call for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1860, including halting the smuggling of weapons to armed groups in Gaza and the need to ease the restrictions on Gaza's crossing points.

Morocco

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what dates each Minister in his Department has *(a)* visited Morocco and *(b)* had a meeting to discuss issues related to Morocco since 1997. [28440]

Alistair Burt: I visited Morocco between 30 November and 2 December 2010.

Previous visits by Foreign and Commonwealth Ministers since 1997 include:

The hon. Member for Bury South (Mr Lewis), November 2009

Dr Kim Howells (former Member for Pontypridd) April 2008, June 2006 and July 2005

The right hon. Member for Blackburn (Mr Straw), February 2006

The right hon. Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, January 2005, May 2004 and September 2003

The right hon. Member for Rotherham (Mr MacShane), December 2004

Mike O'Brien, (former Member for North Warwickshire) February 2004

As Minister with responsibility for our relations with Morocco, I have regular meetings to discuss the country. I am sure this was the case with previous Governments.

North Korea

Jonathan Reynolds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effects on international peace and stability of the recent actions of the government of North Korea. [28454]

Mr Jeremy Browne: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary strongly condemned North Korea for its unprovoked attack on Yeonpyeong Island on 23 November, which has raised tensions and threatened security on the Korean Peninsula. Recent reports that North Korea has been developing a uranium enrichment facility are also deeply concerning. This is in clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions and poses a threat to the region.

Philippines: Homicide

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has had discussions with the Government of the Philippines on the killings at Maguindanao in the Southern Philippines on 23 November 2009; and if he will make a statement. [28217]

Mr Jeremy Browne: Both our ambassador in Manila and the EU presidency made statements strongly condemning the killings in Maguindanao on 23 November 2009, and conveying condolences to the families of the victims. We also called for urgent action to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Our ambassador to the Philippines met the chair of the Philippines Commission for Human Rights to discuss the situation and make our position clear.

UN Resolutions: Capital Punishment

Ms Bagshawe: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what representations he made at UN level on the decision of the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly to delete the reference to sexual orientation from its resolution condemning extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; [28127]

(2) what discussions he has had with his UN counterparts on the decision of the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly to delete the reference to sexual orientation from the resolution condemning extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. [28924]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The Government were very disappointed that the reference to sexual orientation was removed from the UN General Assembly resolution on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. Prior to the vote on this amendment, we made a statement objecting to the deletion of this reference:

> "To accept this amendment would be to accept that this particularly vulnerable group of people do not deserve specific mention, perhaps even to suggest that they do not warrant the same protection from killings. To us this suggestion is an affront to equality and respect for human dignity."

We voted against the amendment.

We are currently discussing the outcome of the resolution with like-minded countries. While we remain disappointed that the explicit mention of sexual orientation has been removed from language on "killings committed for any discriminatory reason", we interpret the broad language which replaced it to include these types of killings, and will support the text as a whole in the plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly on that basis.

The Government continue to oppose violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in all circumstances. We will continue to work bilaterally and through international organisations, including the UN, to promote and protect the rights of LGBT people.

Western Sahara: Human Rights

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had at the United Nations on the deployment of human rights monitors to Western Sahara. [28418]

Alistair Burt: The Government support the idea of greater transparency and independent verification of the human rights situation in Western Sahara. Discussions regarding human rights monitoring in Western Sahara need to explore all options and identify which organisation is best placed to deliver that function.

We remain in close touch with a range of partners on the question of human rights in Western Sahara, including at the United Nations.

Zimbabwe: Press Freedom

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the safety of journalists in Zimbabwe; and if he will make a statement. [28218]

Mr Jeremy Browne: Despite the substantial reduction in violence since the formation of the Inclusive Government, we continue to be concerned about politically-inspired human rights abuses perpetrated against journalists, as well as political and civil society activists. All forms of intimidation, harassment and arbitrary arrests are unacceptable. We advise British journalists intending to carry out any reporting or official photography in Zimbabwe to ensure that they have applied for the proper accreditation.

We remain concerned that the Zimbabwean parliament has not yet repealed repressive legislation and there has been little progress on judicial reform or establishing the rule of law. We continue to monitor the situation on the ground and urge all sides of government to observe the spirit as well as the letter of the Global Political Agreement in full. We call regularly, both bilaterally and with EU member states, for an end to all such abuses and the restoration of internationally accepted human rights standards in Zimbabwe.

EDUCATION

Classroom Assistants: Manpower

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many classroom assistants he expects to be employed in schools in each of the next five years. [24217]

Mr Gibb: The numbers of teachers and classroom assistants that schools employ in future years will, as now, be a matter for them to decide, according to local needs and subject to statutory requirements that infant class sizes will not exceed 30 pupils.

Departmental Food

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether his Department has guidelines on ensuring that food used for his Department's official functions is of domestic origin. [25538]

Tim Loughton: The Department for Education has no formal guidelines on ensuring that food for official department functions is of domestic origin. This does not preclude the Department specifying to the supplier that, where practicable and within departmental spend guidelines, they should use food that is locally produced and sourced.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans his Department has to provide financial support to young people to encourage them to continue their education past the age of 16. [24948]

Mr Gibb: As the Chancellor of the Exchequer, my right hon. Friend the Member for Tatton (Mr Osborne) announced on 20 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 949-65, we are replacing the education maintenance allowance (EMA) scheme, from September 2011, with an enhanced discretionary learner support fund. We have taken this decision because the evidence suggests that around 90% of the young people who receive EMA would still have participated in education if the scheme were not available.

Replacing EMA with an enhanced discretionary fund will mean that decisions about support will be made on the basis of a local assessment of the personal circumstances of individual students, enabling closer targeting of resource to individual young people who face a real financial barrier to participation.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what rights of appeal will be given to *(a)* students and *(b)* their parents whose applications for financial help under the Government's plans to replace the education maintenance allowance are refused. [24956]

Mr Gibb: We will replace the education maintenance allowance with an enhanced discretionary learner support fund, so that schools, colleges and training organisations can more effectively target support to those individual students that they assess as in most need.

We will consult with schools and colleges before finalising arrangements for the new scheme, including any routes of appeal. Under current arrangements for discretionary learner support funding it is for the school, college or training organisation to set out their procedures for students to appeal.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what meetings he has had with head teachers to discuss his plans to replace the education maintenance allowance; and who was present at each such meeting. [24974]

Mr Gibb: The Government took the decision to end the education maintenance allowance (EMA) on the basis of evaluation and other research evidence which indicates that the scheme does not effectively target those young people who need financial support to enable them to participate in education and training. In finalising the enhanced discretionary learner support scheme that will replace EMA the Department will consult with schools, colleges and training organisations.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he intends to produce guidance for head teachers and college principals on the criteria which should be used to allocate the money they receive under the Government's plans to replace the education maintenance allowance. [24976]

Mr Gibb: The enhanced fund will build on the current discretionary learner support funds, which many schools, colleges and training organisations already use very effectively. They are better placed than Government to target support to individual students who have most need of it to continue in education.

The Department intends to consult with schools, colleges and training providers about the arrangements for the enhanced discretionary learner support fund, including any guidance that may be provided.

Education Maintenance Allowance: Birmingham

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the effects of removing education maintenance allowance on disadvantaged young people in Birmingham. [24949]

Mr Gibb: We are committed to making sure that every young person remains in education or training until they are 18. Where young people need extra support to realise their potential we will ensure that services are in place to support the most vulnerable.

In reaching the decision to end education maintenance allowance (EMA) we have looked closely at evaluation evidence and other research, which indicates that the scheme does not effectively target those young people who need financial support to enable them to participate in education. The evidence suggests that around 90% of the young people who receive EMA would still have participated in education if the scheme were not available.

From 2011/12, EMA will be replaced by an enhanced learner support fund that will be administered by schools and colleges themselves, targeting those young people who face a real financial barrier to participation.

Education Maintenance Allowance: Erith

Teresa Pearce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many students in Erith and Thamesmead constituency claimed education maintenance allowance in each of the last five years. [23912]

Mr Gibb: This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) which operates the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, will write to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in *Hansard* and the House Libraries.

Free School Meals

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what estimate he made of the number of pupils in each constituency who were eligible to receive free school meals in year 11 who went on to *(a)* sixth form college, *(b)* a further education college, *(c)* employment-based training, *(d)* full-time employment, *(e)* part-time employment, *(f)* part-time education or training and *(g)* economic inactivity in each of the last five years; [24709]

(2) what estimate he made of the number of pupils in each constituency who were eligible to receive free school meals in year 11 who *(a)* went on to study A-levels, *(b)* undertook an apprenticeship and *(c)* participated in other forms of education or training in each of the last five years. [24710]

Mr Gibb: The information requested, providing estimates of the activities of young people who had been in receipt of free school meals (FSM) in year 11, by local authority, for each year between 2004/05 and 2008/09 has been placed in the House Libraries. The information is based on what they were doing at academic age 16, normally the first year after completing compulsory education. The source of these estimates is the Young People's Matched Administrative Dataset (YPMAD). The YPMAD cannot be used to produce robust estimates of participation at constituency level, so local authority figures are provided. This source cannot provide information on either employment or economic status.

Chris Skidmore: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) how many pupils eligible for free school meals were entered for GCSEs in *(a)* physics, *(b)* chemistry, *(c)* biology and *(d)* three separate sciences in each local authority in 2009; [24239]

(2) how many pupils eligible for free school meals were entered for a modern language GCSE in each local authority in 2009. [24240]

Mr Gibb: The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

New Schools Network

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what responsibilities he has assigned to *(a)* the free schools group in his Department and *(b)* the New Schools Network in respect of free schools. [24758]

Mr Gibb: The Free Schools Group (FRG), situated within the Infrastructure and Funding Directorate of the Department, is responsible for all aspects of free schools policy and implementation. The FRG is, for example, working with groups wishing to join the first wave of free schools. Informed by its work with these early groups, supporting them through the process, the FRG is developing policy for future free schools. The FRG is also working with those groups that have started the business case and plan stage and will support them through the process, up to and including the opening of the new school.

The New Schools Network is an independent charitable organisation that is funded by the Department to offer support to individuals and groups interested in setting up a new school.

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what advice he received from officials in his Department on the New Schools Network prior to awarding it a grant to administer advice on free schools. [24759]

Mr Gibb: My right hon. Friend received a range of advice from officials in respect of the awarding of a grant to New Schools Network, including finance, procurement and legal advice.

Schools: Admissions

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what information local authorities are required to provide to his Department on the number of children resident in their areas who do not have school places. [26365]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 25 November 2010]:* The Department does not collect information on the number of children in a local authority that have not been allocated a school place. It is the responsibility of each local authority to manage the supply and demand for primary and secondary school places in its area and to secure a place for every child of statutory school age who wants one.

Schools: North Yorkshire

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many complaints he has received on the consultation process relating to the schools reviews being undertaken by North Yorkshire county council. [25539]

Mr Gibb: Decisions on school reorganisations are taken under the statutory local decision-making process. Consultation forms the first part of this process, and any responses or complaints about the consultation being carried out should be directed to the local authority which is running the consultation and which will decide whether to move to the publication of proposals, and not the Secretary of State. I can however confirm that to date seven pieces of correspondence have been received by the Department about the consultation which North Yorkshire county council has conducted.

Teachers: Further Education

Mr Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he plans to allow further education lecturers to teach in maintained schools. [25772]

Mr Gibb: Schools may already employ suitably skilled and experienced staff with a further education background as instructors, provided that no suitable qualified or trainee teacher is available to the school to fill the post.

Teachers: Manpower

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many teachers he expects to be employed by schools in each of the next five years. [24220]

Mr Gibb: The numbers of teachers and classroom assistants that schools employ in future years will, as now, be a matter for them to decide, according to local needs and subject to statutory requirements that infant class sizes will not exceed 30 pupils.

Teachers: Pay

Iain Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether the freeze on public sector salaries applies to progress on pay spines for teachers. [24423]

Mr Gibb: There are no changes planned to the pay progression provisions within the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document as a result of the Government's announcement in the emergency Budget of a two-year freeze to public sector pay.

Teachers have benefitted from a three-year pay deal which has seen increases of 2.45%, 2.3% and 2.3% with the last increase being paid from September 2010. The pay freeze will take effect from September 2011 for teachers but will not alter provisions for progression through the pay scales.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Audit Commission: Marketing

Mr Burley: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many and what types of gift products the Audit Commission purchased from *(a)* the Purple Company (UK) and *(b)* Giftpoint in each of the last three financial years; and at what cost to the public purse. [27911]

Robert Neill: This is an operational matter for the Audit Commission and I have asked the chief executive of the Audit Commission to write to my hon. Friend direct.

Letter from Eugene Sullivan, dated 6 December 2010:

Your Parliamentary Question has been passed to me to reply.

The Audit Commission has purchased a small number of products from the Purple Company in the last three financial years:

		£
11 May 2010	66 x Tombo Teamwear Sports T-shirts @ £11.70 each[1]	772.20
22 May 2010	6 x Tombo Teamwear Sports T-shirts @ £11.70 each[1]	70.20

[1] Reimbursed by staff.

Our office premises in Bristol houses a gym for use by staff. This is a member-supported club where an annual fee is charged for use of the gym and for any equipment purchased, including sports wear. The T-shirts purchased were paid for by members (staff) out of their annual membership fees. There is a nil cost to the Audit Commission.

Additionally there were 1000 Post-It notes and 50 T-shirts purchased as support material supplied at our National Managers' Conference in November 2008. It was used on the Human Resources and Audit stands.

		£
29 October 2008	1,000 x Post-It Notes + 50 T-shirts	990.00

The Audit Commission has purchased three gift products from Giftpoint in the last three financial years:

		£
21 January 2009	250 cotton shopper bags	290.00
21 January 2009	Ball pens	3,567.25
19 March 2009	250 cotton shopper bags	290.00

Cotton shopper bags (2 invoices totalling £580) were purchased for distribution at our events for Governors and Directors/Senior Management of Foundation Trusts and Mental Health Trusts. The ball pens were a promotional item at these and other events at which we exhibit.

Audit Commission: Pensions

David Mowat: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he plans to announce his proposals for the future of the Audit Commission's pension scheme. [27995]

Robert Neill: My Department is working with the Audit Commission and other partners to consider a range of options for the future of local audit following the disbandment of the Commission. This includes discussing options for the Commission's pension scheme with its Chair of Trustees and Commission colleagues, and we intend to make an announcement as soon as practicable.

Care Homes: Pets

Dr Thérèse Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he is taking steps to ensure that residential homes give adequate consideration to granting requests from residents to take their pets into homes. [28394]

Paul Burstow: I have been asked to reply.

The Government appreciate that pets and companion animals can be a source of great comfort to their owners. We would certainly encourage residential care providers to give careful consideration to granting requests from residents to take their pets into care homes.

However, there are no plans to issue directions to residential care providers. This is a complex matter; there are many, sometimes competing issues to consider. For example, care home premises may not necessarily be suitable for the keeping of pets, or certain kinds of pet. The wishes of all residents must be taken into account; some may not wish to share their environment with animals. Residents who are frail or in poor health may not be able to care for their pets properly, however much they might wish to.

The Government consider that the only practically workable approach is to allow care providers the freedom to decide, in the light of individual local circumstances, whether or not to permit residents to keep pets.

Departmental Postal Services

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the monetary value was of contracts between his Department and its predecessors and *(a)* Post Office Ltd and *(b)* Royal Mail in (i) 1997-98 and (ii) each year since 2004-05. [24907]

Robert Neill: The Department no longer hold details of the monetary value of contracts that may have been held with Post Office Ltd and Royal Mail in 1997-98.

Since 2004-05 the following amounts have been paid to Royal Mail in relation to postage:

Financial year	£
2004-05	901,275
2005-06	5,572
2006-07	297,524
2007-08	14,342
2008-09	9,175
2009-10	4,855
2010 (to October)	1,929

No payments have been made to Post Office Ltd.

It has been the Department's practice to ask its facilities management provider to sub-contract all postal services. Expenditure with Royal Mail is largely for transactional postal cost in outlying DCLG stations that do not have access to the facilities management arrangements. However in 2004-05 and 2006-07 the following amounts were paid to Royal Mail to support large projects:

Financial year	£
2004-05	893,696
2006-07	284,068

This breaks down as follows:

Financial year	*Project*	£
2004-05	Elected Regional Assemblies	377,062
	Mailing on Fire Safety	180,000
	Elected Regional Assembly Door Drop Leaflet.	169,736
	Elected Regional Assemblies	117,098
	Regional Assemblies (NE Durham House Mailer)	29,353
	Mailing on Fire Safety	20,447
	Total	893,696
2006-07	Fire and Rescue Service Postal Survey.	178,830
	Fire and Rescue Service Postal Survey.	105,238
	Total	284,068

Departmental Public Appointments

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether his Department issues internal guidance on the communication of decisions regarding appointments or reappointments of board members to public bodies. [28695]

Robert Neill: Decisions about ministerial appointments and reappointments to the boards of public bodies are taken in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments' code of practice, which sets out requirements for communicating those decisions. There is no separate internal guidance issued on the communication of decisions regarding appointments or reappointments of board members to public bodies.

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment he has made of his Department's compliance with the code of practice of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in respect of ministerial appointments to public bodies in relation to the decision not to reappoint Ms Jenny Watson to the Audit Commission. [28696]

Robert Neill: Decisions about reappointments to the Board of the Audit Commission were taken in accordance with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' code of practice.

English Regions Network: Finance

Mr Burley: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will cease all funding to the English Regions Network; and how much the Network received from his Department and its predecessors in each year since its inception. [27313]

Robert Neill: The Department no longer provides funds to the English Regions Network. The following table sets the grants provided to the ERN since it was established. The ERN was the umbrella organisation for the regional assemblies.

	£
2001-02	1,000,000
2002-03	200,000
2003-04	200,000
2004-05	200,000
2005-06	200,000
2006-07	240,000
2007-08	229,000
2008-09	58,790
2009-10	60,000

EU Grants and Loans: North East

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps he is taking to align the proposed Regional Growth Fund with the North East England 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund Competitiveness Programme. [29059]

Robert Neill: I can confirm that we intend to align the regional growth fund with the European regional development fund, as stated in the Local Growth White Paper "Local Growth: realising every place's potential", a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

My officials are currently holding discussions with colleagues in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills with a view to facilitating this. Organisations in the north-east can apply for support from both funds, where the aims of their bids are eligible for support from both funds.

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what risk assessment his Department has undertaken of the potential effects of the abolition of One North East on the delivery of the North East England 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund Competitiveness Programme; and what steps he has taken to mitigate any risks identified. [29118]

Robert Neill: We are currently considering the future arrangements for running European regional development fund programmes in England, after the abolition of the regional development agencies. As part of this consideration, we have carried out a detailed assessment of the implications of the change to new delivery arrangements and the mitigating measures needed to ensure that the programmes continue to be run in compliance with the EC regulations. We will make an announcement when the decision has been reached.

Fire Services

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment he has made of the likely effect on fire services of the outcome of the comprehensive spending review. [28409]

Robert Neill: An equality impact assessment will be published in due course. I also refer the hon. Member to my letter to fire authorities on the spending review, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

Fire Services: Greater London

Teresa Pearce: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 50W, on fire services: Greater London, for what reasons he has had no discussions with the Chairman of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority on the deployment of the 27 engines used to provide emergency fire cover during the recent strike. [28801]

Robert Neill: No discussions on this matter were requested and none were sought. All operational decisions on the deployment of assets, including fire engines, are the responsibility of London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, and not central Government.

Fire Services: Pay

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate he has made of the number of firefighters who will be affected by the public sector pay freeze. [29065]

Robert Neill: Decisions about firefighter pay are for fire and rescue authorities. However, we would expect all local authorities to exercise pay restraint in keeping with the central Government public sector pay freeze announced in the emergency Budget.

Homelessness: North West

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many people have been recorded as homeless in *(a)* Cumbria, *(b)* the North West and *(c)* each parliamentary constituency in Cumbria since 1979. [27980]

Grant Shapps: Summary tables giving the number of households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty, the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by each local authority and rough sleeper counts and estimates as far back as each series is available have been placed in the Library of the House.

Information about local authorities' discharge of their duties under homelessness legislation is collected on quarterly PIE returns. Summary information about English local housing authorities' actions under the homelessness legislation (part 7 of the Housing Act 1996) is collected at local authority level, and published by the Department in the quarterly Statistical Release on Statutory Homelessness, available both in the Library of the House and via the DCLG website:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingresearch/housingstatistics/housingstatisticsby/homelessnessstatistics/publicationshomelessness/

Data collected include the number of households accepted by local housing authorities as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need, and therefore owed a main homelessness duty (to secure that suitable accommodation is available). If a settled home is not immediately available, the authority must secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available and this information is also collected. Information on acceptances and number of households in temporary accommodation at local authority level is available from 1997-98 onwards.

Information is also collected on rough sleeping. Since 1998, only councils in areas with a known, or suspected, rough sleeping problem were required to conduct an official rough sleeper count, which meant that only 70 councils submitted information to central Government. Figures published in July 2010 showed that under this previous method, on any given night there were 440 rough sleepers in England. However, when the remaining 256 councils provided estimates of the scale of the problem in their areas, this added a further estimated 807 rough sleepers, taking the national total to 1,247 rough sleepers on any given night.

Under new guidance all councils across England will now provide information on rough sleeping. This move follows consultation with homelessness charities and councils and is aimed at getting a clearer picture of the scale of the problem in each area so more targeted support can be provided to some of the most vulnerable in society.

Rough sleeping figures are published by the Department on the DCLG website:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/roughsleepingcount2010

The Department does not collect data on homelessness at parliamentary constituency level.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what progress he has made on the creation of local enterprise partnerships. [28782]

Robert Neill: On 28 October, the Government published their Local Growth White Paper, which set out their approach to achieving local economic growth by shifting power to local levels and helping to create the right conditions for growth and recovery. This included announcing the first 24 local enterprise partnerships which would proceed. These partnerships are now in the process of establishing their boards and local governance structures in line with local requirements.

Government will work with the relevant local authority and business partners in other parts of the country where no local enterprise partnership has been announced, in order to ensure future proposals allow all areas to progress, where civic leaders and business community wish to do this. I have asked my officials to engage directly with these local partners. Government will welcome revised proposals from these places and make further announcements as they become ready.

Local Government Finance

Steve Rotheram: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) whether he has sought the advice of the District Auditor on the appropriateness of the use by local authorities of cash reserves; [29041]

(2) if he will ensure that in circumstances in which local authorities reduce the level of funds held in reserve for contingencies his Department provides funding to match any shortfall arising from the realisation of the financial risks against which reserves had previously been earmarked. [29050]

Robert Neill: The use of a local authority's reserves is for each council to determine.

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, my right hon. Friend the Member for Brentwood and Ongar (Mr Pickles) said in a press notice on 30 November that it is sensible, as part of wider financial planning, for council treasurers to consider drawing on their reserves to address short-term costs and pressures, such as necessary restructuring, and to invest now in order to realise savings in the longer term.

Local Government Finance: Liverpool

Steve Rotheram: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will ensure that Liverpool city council receives a smaller percentage reduction in its grant income than more affluent local authorities. [29043]

Robert Neill: We will announce our proposals for the local government finance settlement for 2011-12 in the usual manner in due course.

Non-domestic Rates

Ms Bagshawe: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much was collected by each local authority in England in national non-domestic rates in each of the last three years for which figures are available; how much was received by each local authority in Revenue Support Grant in each of those years; and what the net income was for each local authority from these transactions. [28121]

Robert Neill: I have today placed in the Library of the House tables for 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 that give details of (a) how much was received by each local authority in England in redistributed national non-domestic rates, Revenue Support Grant and other grants including Police Grant and (b) how much was contributed to the national non-domestic rates pool by each local authority in England.

Details of the net income for each local authority from these transactions have not been included as it is not a meaningful figure. National non-domestic rates are collected by 326 authorities and paid into a central pool before being redistributed to 421 authorities.

Second Homes

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many and what proportion of dwellings in each local authority area were registered as second homes for council tax purposes in each year since 1997. [27982]

Robert Neill: I have today placed in the Library of the House a table containing details of the number and proportion of dwellings in each local authority area in England that were registered as second homes for council tax purposes since 2004. Information for previous years is not available.

The data are from a snapshot taken each year and are as recorded by each local authority in the council tax base returns submitted annually to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Reliable estimates before 2004 are not available because there was no particular incentive for local authorities to distinguish between second homes and long-term empty homes on their council tax base forms. However, from April 2004 local authorities have had the discretion to set the council tax discount on properties considered to be second homes at between 50% and 10%.

Supporting People Programme

Emma Reynolds: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether there is any variation in the mechanism by which the level of the Supporting People grant is calculated by local authorities in different regions of England, including data in respect of additional needs. [28194]

Andrew Stunell: The Supporting People Programme grant has previously been allocated to top tier local authorities using the Supporting People Distribution Formula which takes account of population, level of deprivations, people at risk and other relevant needs data.

TRANSPORT

Accident Investigation

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the likely effects on the functions carried out by his Department's *(a)* Air Accident Investigation Branch, *(b)* Rail Accident Investigation Branch and *(c)* Marine Accident Investigation Branch of reductions to his Department's central administration budget; and if he will make a statement. [27043]

Mr Philip Hammond: The accident investigation branches (AIBs) do not form part of the Department's central administration budget as they are categorised as Programme expenditure.

We have, however, carried out an assessment of potential productivity improvements in the AIBs which could be made without impacting their statutory functions. Our assessment shows that cost reductions can be made by focusing their activities more closely on their core safety role and through rationalising support functions and other efficiency improvements. This will include sharing facilities and equipment across the three AIBs wherever this is practical.

Airports: Security

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what timetable he has set for the introduction of his proposed new regulatory system for passenger security checks at airports. [21803]

Mr Philip Hammond: There is no finalised timetable for the introduction of a new regulatory system for passenger security checks at airports. The issuing of timing will be addressed in the forthcoming consultation.

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport with whom his Department plans to consult on his proposals for a new regulatory system for passenger security at airports; and if he will place in the Library *(a)* a copy of the consultation document and *(b)* a list of all consultees. [21805]

Mr Philip Hammond: The Department for Transport plans to consult widely with all stakeholders in accordance with the Government Code of Practice on Consultation. A copy of the consultation document including a list of all consultees will be placed in the Library when the consultation paper is published.

Departmental Consultants

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the management consultancy for which his Department paid Interfleet (i) £106,817.12 on 13 May 2010 and (ii) £108,379.16 on 20 July 2010. [27144]

Mrs Villiers: Interfleet is contracted by the Department for Transport to provide specialist technical advice for the procurement of new trains required for the Thameslink Programme.

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the legal advice for which his Department paid Freshfields £148,773.21 on 9 September 2010. [27145]

Mrs Villiers: Freshfields is contracted by the Department for Transport to provide specialist legal advice for the procurement of new trains required for the Thameslink Programme.

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the legal advice for which his Department paid CMS Cameron *(a)* £269,116.77 on 31 August 2010, *(b)* £98,150.98 on 27 September 2010 and *(c)* £166,610.73 on 28 September 2010. [27146]

Mrs Villiers: The legal fees paid to CMS Cameron McKenna were in relation to advice provided by them on: the restructuring of the UK, French and Belgian interests in Eurostar into a standalone company on 1 September 2010; and the sale of HS1 and associated properties and lease arrangements that was announced on 5 November 2010.

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the management consultancy for which his Department paid the Nichols Group £145,593.02 on 18 May 2010. [27148]

Mrs Villiers: The majority of the payment to Nichols Group dated 18 May 2010 was for specialist consultancy services in respect of programme management, and commercial and franchise negotiations required as part of the Intercity Express Programme (IEP). The IEP Programme was started by the previous Administration, and sought to replace Britain's fleet of high speed trains, originally deployed by British Rail in the 1970s and 1980s.

In addition, £22,980.80 of the payment was made in respect of management consultancy on the Strategic Roads Investment Programme and £18,485.69 on the Pendolino Lengthening Programme.

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the management consultancy for which his Department paid Jacobs Engineering (a) £149,911.38 on 21 June 2010, (b) £135,940.96 on 15 July 2010, (c) £112,538.46 on 2 August 2010 and (d) £114,159.35 on 3 September 2010. [27149]

Mrs Villiers: Jacobs Engineering UK Ltd is engaged jointly by the Department for Transport (DfT) and Transport for London (TfL) to carry out a 'project representative' function for the Crossrail project, in which the Government are directly investing £4.7 billion. Half of the costs paid by DfT are subsequently recovered from TfL.

The project representative provides technical advice and assurance on all aspects of the delivery of the Crossrail project to both DfT and TfL. It is made up of a small team of specialists with expertise in many areas of large construction programmes including design, construction, procurement, commercial, risk management and value engineering as well as specific competencies related to the scheme, including civil engineering, tunnelling, rolling stock, signalling, railway systems, and railway operations.

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the management consultancy for which his Department paid Mott MacDonald (a) £142,963.63 on 26 May 2010 and (b) £187,567.16 on 27 May 2010. [27150]

Mrs Villiers: The payments to Mott MacDonald on the above dates were for specialist advice and consultancy services in respect of the commercial and franchise negotiations required as part of the Intercity Express Programme (IEP) during the last two financial periods of the 2009-10 financial year.

The IEP programme was started by the previous Administration and sought to replace Britain's fleet of high speed trains, originally deployed by British Rail in the 1970s and 1980s.

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the management consultancy for which his Department paid PricewaterhouseCoopers (a) £162,040.95 on 20 May 2010 and (b) £102,590.87 on 16 June 2010. [27151]

Mrs Villiers: PricewaterhouseCoopers is contracted by the Department for Transport to provide specialist financial advice for the procurement of new trains required for the Thameslink Programme.

Departmental Grants

Anas Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what grants have been awarded by his Department in 2010-11 to date; what grants he plans to award in each of then next two years; what the monetary value is of each such grant; and to which organisations such grants are made; [27669]

(2) how much funding his Department has allocated in grants for *(a)* 2009-10 and *(b)* 2010-11; and how much such funding he plans to allocate for 2011-12. [27672]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 30 November 2010]*: The Department for Transport allocated £9.1 billion to grants in 2009-10, and estimates that it will allocate £8.4 billion to grants in 2010-11.

Year to date grant payments for 2010-11 are included in the data available on the Department for Transport's website, which details monthly spend as part of the Government's transparency agenda. This can be found at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/procurement/contracts/spending

Grant expenditure can be identified from the 'expense type' category.

Detailed information relating to grant allocations for 2011-12 and 2012-13 is not currently available, but announcements have been made about high level grant budgets for the spending review period. These can be found in the Department for Transport's press notice of 20 October 2010, at:

http://nds.coi.gov.uk/clientmicrosite/Content/Detail.aspx?ClientId=202&NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseID=416118&SubjectId=36

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Mr Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible spent on press cuttings services in each of the last 12 months [25482]

Norman Baker: The cost of press cuttings services to the Department for the 12 months from October 2009 to September 2010 is provided in the following table.

(a) Cost of press cuttings services to the Department for Transport

£

	DFT Central	*Driving Standards Agency*	*Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency*	*Highways Agency*
2009				
October	14,806.77	352.43	Nil	3,140.57
November	12,662.02	340.85	220.45	6,082.86
December	14,631.88	385.38	230.25	4,935.48
2010				
January	14,574.21	352.89	673.60	6,133.48
February	12,538.01	412.28	205.75	3,894.38
March	14,620.17	652.46	144.50	3,754.39
April	13,990.25	471.66	161.65	2,233.25
May	11,824.49	438.89	Nil	2,032.17
June	9,246.44	406.01	Nil	1,776.34
July	10,197.06	527.96	Nil	3,848.82
August	9,000.15	557.35	Nil	4,202.87
September	9,240.35	778.29	Nil	1,616.89

The remaining executive agencies—the Government Car and Despatch Agency, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, the Vehicle Certification Agency, and the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency—have not procured press cuttings services in the 12 months from October 2009 to September 2010.

(b) Cost of press cuttings services to the Department for Transport's non-departmental public bodies could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Security

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether security functions carried out for his Department by TRANSEC will be affected by reductions to his Department's central administration budget; and if he will make a statement. [27042]

Mr Philip Hammond: TRANSEC does not form part of the Department's central administration budget as it is funded out of Programme expenditure.

During the spending review we carried out a thorough reassessment of the most cost-effective way of providing transport security in the future. This will result in internal efficiencies and other changes which will produce cost savings while maintaining essential security functions.

Departmental Sponsorship

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what expenditure *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [27529]

Norman Baker: I am afraid that the information requested can be provided only at disproportionate cost. A marketing and communications freeze was introduced in May 2010.

Dover Harbour Board

Maria Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer to the right hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne East of 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 34W, whether the proposal from Dover People's Port to buy the assets of the Dover Harbour Board is also under consideration; and upon what basis his decision will be made. [26886]

Mike Penning *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* The decision Minister, my right hon. Friend the Minister of State, Department for Transport (Mrs Villiers), is currently considering the proposed transfer scheme from Dover Harbour Board, as well as the representations received from third parties. The decision Minister will make her decision having regard to the factors contained in the Department's guidance note on the procedure for the voluntary sale of trust ports, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

I have written to the Dover People's Port Trust Limited to explain that, until there has been a decision on the transfer scheme, it would be premature for any offers for the Port of Dover to be considered.

Maria Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what legal advice he has received from his Department on whether primary legislation is required before any sale of the assets of the Dover Harbour Board may proceed; and if he will make a statement. [26966]

Mike Penning *[holding answer 29 November 2010]*: The Government do not normally disclose their legal advice.

The Ports Act 1991 was used in the 1990s to achieve a transfer in ownership of several major trust ports.

The Act remains in force. The Department for Transport produced guidance earlier this year as to how it expects applications made under that Act by relevant harbour authorities to be brought forward and processed. A copy of the guidance is in the Library of the House.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

Mr Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* material, *(b)* administrative and *(c)* postage costs the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency incurred in issuing tax discs in the latest year for which figures are available. [28870]

Mike Penning: The latest figures for the cost of issuing tax discs this year (2010-11) are.

	£
Material	5,037,493
Administrative	48,457,495
Postage	13,746,012

Mr Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what posts exist in the tax disc section of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency; and what salary is payable to holders of each such post. [28871]

Mike Penning: Around 45 million tax discs are issued annually, raising £5.6 billion in vehicle excise duty for the Exchequer. Tax discs are sold through three channels. Post offices account for 57% of applications; the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's electronic vehicle licensing internet and telephone system accounts for around 41% of applications. The remaining 2% of tax disc applications are handled by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's local offices.

As well as staff employed in the local office network and supporting the electronic vehicle licensing system, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency also employs staff who are involved in the procurement, despatch and the refund of tax discs. None of these staff work solely on the issuing of tax discs. These staff are mainly at the administrative grades. DVLA's administrative pay structure is:

		£
Pay band	*Minimum*	*Target*
National		
Pay band 1	14,000	15,200
Pay band 2	16,735	18,000
London		
Pay band 1	17,486	18,895
Pay band 2	20,730	21,655

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Local Government

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which local authorities have been *(a)* banned and *(b)* suspended from accessing the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency database in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [23823]

Mike Penning *[holding answer 12 November 2010]*: No local authority has been banned from accessing the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's vehicle database within the last 12 months. The following authorities have been temporarily suspended during the last 12 months from requesting information from the database until they could demonstrate full compliance with the strict terms and conditions for access to data.

Ashfield District Council
Aylesbury Vale District Council
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Bedford Borough Council
Birmingham City Council
Blackpool Borough Council
Blaenau Gwent Borough Council
Bournemouth Borough Council
Bracknell Forest Council
Breckland Council
Bristol City Council
Broadlands District Council
Bromley L B
Buckingham County Council
Burnley Borough Council
Cambridge City Council
Cannock Chase Council
Carlisle City Council
Carmarthen Council
Carmarthenshire County Council
Central Bedfordshire Council
Chiltern District Council
Chorley Borough Council
City of York
Cornwall Council
Croydon Council
Cumbria County Council
Dacorum Borough Council
Dudley Council
Durham County Council
Ealing Council
East Dorset District Council
East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Erewash Borough Council
Fenland District Council
Forest Heath District Council
Gloucester City Council
Guildford Borough Council
Hampshire Council (East)
Hampshire County Council
Hartlepool
Hastings Council
Hereford Council
Ipswich Borough Council

Kent County Council
Kirklees District Council
Leicester City Council
Lewes Council
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
London Borough Epping Forrest
London Borough Newham
Manchester City Council
Mendip District Council
Middlesbrough
Milton Keynes Council
N E Lincolnshire
New Forest District Council
Newcastle upon Tyne
North Kesteven District Council
Northumberland
Oldham Council
Pendle Borough Council
Poole Council
Portsmouth City Council
Ribble Borough Council (South)
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Richmond on Thames
Salford County Council
Selby District Council
Shropshire Council
Somerset County Council
South Cambridgeshire Council
South Lakeland
Southampton Council
Southend on Sea Borough Council
St Albans City and District Council
St Helens Council
Stockton on Tees
Stroud District Council
Surrey Heath Borough Council
Three Rivers District Council
Warrington Borough Council
Warwick District Council
Watford Borough Council
Wigan MBC
Wiltshire Council
Worcester County Council
Wychavon District Council
Wycombe District Council

Driving Tests

Jack Lopresti: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to reduce the amount of time learner drivers have to wait to take a driving test. [26791]

Mike Penning: Waiting times across the country are currently higher than expected. The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) has a shortfall in the number of driving examiners required to deliver the demand for practical driving tests and this is being addressed through a programme of recruitment.

In addition, to help mitigate the impact of the current examiner shortfall, DSA has undertaken a number of actions to increase the number of tests it can deliver. These include:

(1) Offering out-of-hours tests (early mornings, evenings and weekends) at most locations;

(2) Having examiner managers do an increased amount of testing.

Driving: Eyesight

Mr Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to raise awareness among drivers *(a)* of the risks inherent in driving with poor vision and *(b)* that driving with vision below the required standard is an offence; and if he will make a statement. [26773]

Mike Penning: The Department for Transport takes appropriate opportunities to raise awareness of the risks inherent in driving with poor vision.

Driving licence application forms and associated leaflets remind drivers about the ongoing requirement to be able to meet the eyesight standard. Specific information is available on the DirectGov website. Advertisements also appear on the motoring pages reminding drivers that driving while unable to meet the appropriate eyesight standard is an offence. This advice is also included in the Highway Code that provides essential advice for all drivers. The driving test also requires candidates to demonstrate their ability to meet the required eyesight standard.

Ferries: Fuels

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the extent of the use of alternative fuels in the river ferry sector. [25917]

Mike Penning: The Government have not made an assessment of the extent to which alternative fuels are in use in the river ferry sector. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has some knowledge of the application of alternative fuels in connection with its role as regulator. Currently this information is limited to a very small number of vessels that could be considered to be experimental.

We know that compressed natural gas is being used on ferries in Canada and the Norwegian Government have introduced a number of programmes for their fleet of coastal and fjord vehicle ferries, after the successful experience with the prototype GLUTRA.

Liquid biofuels are now being used by a number of river ferry operators. These are diluted into fuel at low concentrations and reduce the demand for fossil fuels. These types of fuel will be increasingly adopted for use on inland waterway vessels in Europe in the future.

Freight Facilities Grant

Cathy Jamieson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much funding his Department has allocated to the Freight Facilities Grant in each of the last five years. [26905]

Mike Penning: The value of the Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) awards made by the Department in each of the last five years was as follows:

	Total value of awards[1] (£ million)
2005-06[2]	0.9
2006-07[2]	3.2
2007-08	1.2
2008-09	1.8
2009-10	1.5

[1] Figures do not include awards made which were later declined, expired or withdrawn.

[2] Includes awards made by the Department and the Strategic Rail Authority.

Cathy Jamieson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the outcome of the comprehensive spending review on the future of the Freight Facilities Grant. [26907]

Mike Penning: No formal announcement on the future of the Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) scheme has yet been made by the Department for Transport. Following the spending review settlement, we are currently considering what budgets will be available across a number of the Department's smaller programmes (including FFG).

Cathy Jamieson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received on the Freight Facilities Grant scheme. [26908]

Mike Penning: The organisation 'Freight on Rail' made a representation to me on Freight Facilitates Grants in May.

Great Western Railway: Electrification

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to make an announcement on the proposed electrification of the Great Western line to South Wales. [26853]

Mrs Villiers: In his ministerial statement of 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 52-54WS, the Secretary of State for Transport, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), confirmed that the Great Western main line between London and Didcot, Oxford and Newbury would be electrified. The extent of further electrification for intercity services on the Great Western main line is dependent on final decisions on the intercity train option that we choose.

My right hon. Friend also announced that the Department for Transport would be working with the Welsh Assembly Government to review the business case for electrification to Swansea.

Local Transport Plans

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to estimate the effect on levels of walking and cycling in respect of his Department's objectives of the implementation of the second round of local transport plans (LTPs); and what methodology he plans to use to evaluate the effectiveness of LTP3 delivery. [26176]

Norman Baker: The coalition Government have set out their commitment to localism and to ending the top-down performance management of local authorities by Whitehall. In July, I announced that central Government will no longer review local authorities' progress against their Local Transport plans.

In the interests of transparency, and to enable local communities and other stakeholders to hold local transport authorities to account, the Department intends to continue publishing relevant statistics at local authority level as set out in the Transparency section of its Business Plan.

The Department of Health is also developing an outcomes framework for directors of public health to monitor the health and well-being of the local population, and a consultation document on appropriate indicators will be announced shortly.

Motor Vehicles: Insurance

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people his Department employs as part of the Motor Insurance Database's Continuous Insurance Enforcement Project Team. [26872]

Mike Penning *[holding answer 29 November 2010]*: The Department for Transport currently employs in the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency seven full-time equivalents in the Continuous Insurance Enforcement Project Team.

Railways: Fares

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to align the timing of off-peak travel periods between different train operating companies. [25886]

Mrs Villiers: There are no plans at present to harmonise the definition of 'off-peak' for all train operators.

The Franchise Agreement allows individual train operators the flexibility to define what is 'off-peak' according to local conditions. We do not consider it appropriate to require all train operators to have the same off-peak periods as this could lead to many passengers being subject to restrictions at times when it was not necessary.

Railways: Standards

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which 20 rail routes are with the highest levels of congestion. [25792]

Mrs Villiers: Information on rail overcrowding is currently published annually in aggregate form by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) within the National Rail Trends Yearbook, and is available on the ORR website:

www.rail-reg.gov.uk

The latest published data relate to passenger counts carried out by train operators in autumn 2009.

Rescue Services: Helicopters

Michael Dugher: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the evidential basis was for his Department's conclusion that the changes proposed to the resourcing of the search and rescue helicopter programme could be accommodated without initiating a new procurement process; [26671]

(2) what estimate his Department has made of the cost to the public purse of fully funding a de-militarised search and rescue helicopter programme from his Department's departmental expenditure limit; and if he will make a statement. [26672]

Mike Penning: The Government announced in June 2010 that the search and rescue helicopter project would be reviewed in the context of wider pressures on public spending. That review is still ongoing and it would be inappropriate to comment on any specific aspects of the project until decisions have been made on the way forward.

Roads: Accidents

Dr Poulter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress the Government are making on developing road safety measures to reduce the frequency of minor accidents. [26592]

Mike Penning: Existing policies and trends have already delivered the safest roads in the world, with significant falls in all casualties, as well as deaths and the most serious injuries. The Department for Transport is making progress on initiatives to continue to reduce the frequency of both major and minor accidents, including work on a new strategic framework for road safety and related measures.

Most recently we have produced the "Safe Place to Cross" toolkit aimed at six to eleven-year-olds and the innovative partnership between the THINK! team and four major football clubs.

We have also announced in September the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, which will challenge local transport authorities outside London to develop packages of measures that support economic growth and reduce carbon in their communities, as well as delivering cleaner environments, improved safety and increased levels of physical activity.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* fatalities, *(b)* serious injuries and *(c)* other outcomes from road traffic accidents in (i) Cumbria and (ii) England were reported to his Department in each month of the last five years. [27981]

Mike Penning: The following table shows the number of casualties who were *(a)* killed, *(b)* seriously injured or *(c)* slightly injured in reported personal injury road accidents in (i) Cumbria and (ii) England, in each month, between 2005 and 2009.

Casualties in reported personal injury road accidents, by injury severity and month: Cumbria and England, 2005-09

Casualties

		England				*Cumbria*			
Year	*Month*	*Killed*	*Serious*	*Slight*	*Total*	*Killed*	*Serious*	*Slight*	*Total*
2005	January	224	1,891	17,415	19,530	2	24	179	205
	February	199	1,767	15,406	17,372	3	45	168	216
	March	221	1,834	15,987	18,042	5	20	146	171
	April	185	1,927	16,924	19,036	5	31	164	200
	May	214	2,232	18,167	20,613	2	29	207	238
	June	225	2,223	17,925	20,373	1	41	233	275
	July	218	2,285	18,260	20,763	10	29	186	225
	August	230	2,244	17,559	20,033	1	36	205	242
	September	247	2,096	17,687	20,030	0	33	183	216
	October	244	2,307	18,690	21,241	7	32	224	263
	November	259	2,300	19,938	22,497	4	33	214	251
	December	269	2,104	18,581	20,954	5	29	194	228
	Total	2,735	25,210	212,539	240,484	45	382	2,303	2,730
2006	January	200	1,945	15,892	18,037	3	13	160	176
	February	223	1,755	14,791	16,769	4	9	150	163
	March	173	1,826	15,783	17,782	3	27	159	189
	April	213	1,851	14,926	16,990	3	23	144	170
	May	198	2,097	17,096	19,391	3	21	156	180
	June	232	2,278	16,578	19,088	10	27	181	218
	July	223	2,337	17,843	20,403	7	29	203	239
	August	240	2,056	16,505	18,801	9	34	180	223
	September	243	2,126	17,742	20,111	6	30	194	230
	October	264	2,172	18,228	20,664	2	20	187	209
	November	229	2,269	18,358	20,856	2	34	226	262
	December	257	2,144	17,284	19,685	7	18	196	221
	Total	2,695	24,856	201,026	228,577	59	285	2,136	2,480

Casualties in reported personal injury road accidents, by injury severity and month: Cumbria and England, 2005-09

									Casualtie
		England				Cumbria			
Year	*Month*	*Killed*	*Serious*	*Slight*	*Total*	*Killed*	*Serious*	*Slight*	*Total*
2007	January	209	2,040	16,213	18,462	2	32	171	205
	February	168	1,634	13,988	15,790	1	21	147	169
	March	205	1,934	15,919	18,058	4	33	169	206
	April	219	2,061	14,718	16,998	10	46	199	255
	May	218	1,975	16,937	19,130	1	15	169	185
	June	184	2,084	16,568	18,836	3	21	164	188
	July	202	2,186	17,015	19,403	5	15	163	183
	August	226	2,122	15,991	18,339	8	18	212	238
	September	220	2,106	16,097	18,423	3	20	167	190
	October	218	2,062	16,328	18,608	3	20	200	223
	November	220	2,159	17,323	19,702	4	19	186	209
	December	213	1,855	15,647	17,715	1	14	152	167
	Total	2,502	24,218	192,744	219,464	45	274	2,099	2,418
2008	January	192	1,784	14,734	16,710	4	18	143	165
	February	162	1,840	14,935	16,937	0	15	131	146
	March	158	1,705	14,243	16,106	2	17	166	185
	April	158	1,722	14,349	16,229	8	24	149	181
	May	183	1,930	15,084	17,197	3	22	182	207
	June	159	1,977	14,823	16,959	1	23	150	174
	July	209	1,920	15,415	17,544	2	29	152	183
	August	170	1,838	14,246	16,254	1	26	160	187
	September	156	1,994	15,091	17,241	2	14	204	220
	October	217	1,984	16,441	18,642	2	14	150	166
	November	179	1,804	15,602	17,585	3	17	176	196
	December	180	1,748	14,825	16,753	1	28	148	177
	Total	2,123	22,246	179,788	204,157	29	247	1,911	2,187
2009	January	175	1,708	14,232	16,115	1	15	155	171
	February	142	1,350	11,488	12,980	2	15	107	124
	March	137	1,685	13,856	15,678	0	17	110	127
	April	174	1,787	13,464	15,425	1	18	135	154
	May	166	1,907	14,618	16,691	7	15	151	173
	June	154	1,916	14,471	16,541	2	26	146	174
	July	160	1,818	15,367	17,345	2	16	166	184
	August	183	1,792	14,319	16,294	2	27	174	203
	September	152	1,962	14,262	16,376	2	29	156	187
	October	157	1,968	15,954	18,079	1	24	158	183
	November	140	1,856	16,684	18,680	2	12	156	170
	December	140	1,577	14,859	16,576	1	10	168	179
	Total	1,880	21,326	173,574	196,780	23	224	1,782	2,029

Roads: Snow and Ice

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of the Highways Agency's Salt Stock Strategy document. [26396]

Mike Penning: The Highways Agency's policy and standards for its winter service, including salt stock management, is detailed in its largely technical Network Management Manual (NMM). The relevant winter section, along with the full document, is available at the following website:

http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/nmm_rwsc/docs/nmm_part_5.pdf

The Highways Agency constantly reviews and revises the NMM to confirm changes in standards to its contractors and to reflect lessons learned and developing best practice on all aspects of its maintenance activities. I understand that the Highways Agency will be updating the document highlighted by the previous link very shortly.

Speed Limits: Rural Areas

Stephen Phillips: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department plans to take steps to *(a)* amend the way in which speed limits for rural roads are set and *(b)* ensure that the mean speed for vehicles using rural roads is not taken into account in setting appropriate speed limits for those roads. [26658]

Mike Penning: The Department for Transport has no plans to change the way in which speed limits for rural roads are set. Nor are there plans to move away from using mean speeds as the method of indicating an appropriate speed limit.

Local authorities are responsible for setting local speed limits. The Department provides them with guidance, "DfT Circular 01/2006—Setting Local Speed Limits", which ensures speed limits are appropriately and consistently set. The guidance recommends local authorities use mean speeds to determine the appropriate speed limit.

Twickenham Railway Station

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the merits of lengthening of the platforms at Twickenham rail station to facilitate crowd management at stadium events. [26846]

Mrs Villiers: Platform lengthening at Twickenham station is being considered as part of a package of works to facilitate the operation of longer trains and more passenger capacity on the route to London Waterloo by 2014. The Department is in negotiation with Stagecoach South West Trains, the operator of Twickenham station, for the delivery of this additional capacity.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Constituencies: Lancashire

Graham Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations he has received on the effect of his proposals for constituency boundaries on the boundaries of constituencies serving mill towns in East Lancashire. [27221]

Mr Harper: The Cabinet Office does not record correspondence in a way that would enable us to readily identify the specific content of correspondence to establish this.

Electoral Register

Mr Spellar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent estimate has his Department made of the number of owners of second homes who are registered as voters in more than one constituency. [28614]

Mr Harper: The Government have made no such estimate. An individual may be registered at more than one address if it appears to the electoral registration officer in more than one local authority area that they meet the residence requirement in each area. However, it is an offence for a person to vote twice in a general election.

CABINET OFFICE

Government Departments: Procurement

Nick Boles: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office on how many occasions Government Departments have required professional indemnity from a contractor to the level of £1 million or above in each of the last five years; and what the monetary value was of the contracts concerned. [27166]

Mr Maude: This information is not held centrally.

In circumstances where it is appropriate to require professional indemnity insurance, the Cabinet Office advises Departments to set the level of required cover commensurate with the contract's value and associated risks. Setting the level too high could exclude many potential bidders including SMEs.

There are two contracts that have indemnity insurance over this level in the Cabinet Office: the Total Fm contract is £14 million, and the Fujitsu Flex contract is £5 million.

Public Sector: Procurement

Stephen Mosley: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will take steps to enable national and multi-national companies on the Office of Government Commerce framework to subcontract to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in their local areas for the purpose of helping SMEs obtain Government and local authority contracts. [27394]

Mr Maude: There is no reason why suppliers to the public sector cannot advertise sub-contracting opportunities to regional suppliers. Government will be interested in bids which involve SMEs and voluntary organisations. The new "Contracts Finder" facility will give prime contractors to Government the ability to advertise their sub-contracting opportunities online.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Departmental Regulation

Richard Graham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans his Department has to adopt the one-in, one-out system for regulation. [21956]

Chris Grayling: The Department has already adopted the Government's one-in, one-out policy. All new DWP regulatory measures brought forward, and which are within scope of the policy, will be managed accordingly.

Disability Living Allowance

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his most recent estimate is of the number of people who will be affected by the implementation of his proposals to remove the mobility component of disability living allowance in 2014-15. [29066]

Maria Miller: We estimate that approximately 80,000 people who claim disability living allowance and live in residential care will be affected by the measure to cease paying the mobility component in Great Britain from October 2012.

Accurate estimates of the number of people who claim disability living allowance and live in residential care are difficult to produce because before 1998 there was no requirement to record entry or exit dates in to residential care.

The available evidence has been updated in light of new information on the status of care home residents who entered residential care before 1998. We subsequently updated our estimate of the number of people affected by the measure.

Housing Benefit: Wales

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* women and *(b)* men in Wales who will be affected by the implementation of his proposed changes to housing benefit in the comprehensive spending review period. [29051]

Steve Webb: Impact assessments will be completed for each proposed measure in the emergency Budget and the comprehensive spending review. These assessments will be published in the normal way, accompanying the relevant legislation when introduced in Parliament.

Jobcentre Plus: Deptford

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the running cost was of the Jobcentre Plus service in Deptford high street in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [28866]

Chris Grayling: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Darra Singh. I have asked him to provide the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Darra Singh:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the running cost was of the Jobcentre Plus service in Deptford High Street in the last 12 months for which figures are available. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The running cost of the Jobcentre in Deptford High Street over the 2009/10 financial year was £2.2 million, including £0.33 million of estate running costs. This includes both salary costs and associated discretionary spend.

Jobcentre Plus is an agency of the Department for Work and Pensions and many costs are only available for the whole of Jobcentre Plus and are not split down by individual sites. These costs therefore do not include centrally charged costs, such as information technology.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost per square metre was of the premises at 120-124 Deptford high street rented by Trillium on behalf of his Department in 2009-10. [28869]

Chris Grayling: The cost per square metre for the Jobcentre Plus premises at 120-124 high street, Deptford for the year 2009-10 was £400.44. This includes rent (at £59.46 per square metre), business rates, and other components that make up the unitary charge paid by the Department to Telereal Trillium for the provision of fully fitted and serviced accommodation.

Jobcentre Plus: South East

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average cost was of running Jobcentre Plus services at Jobcentres in the South East in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [28867]

Chris Grayling: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Darra Singh. I have asked him to provide the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Darra Singh:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average cost of running Jobcentre Plus services at Jobcentres in the South East in the last 12 months for which figures are available. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The average running cost of running a Jobcentre in the South East region over the 2009/10 financial year was £2.19 million, including £0.54 million of estate running costs. This includes both salary costs and associated discretionary spend.

Jobcentre Plus is an agency of the Department for Work and Pensions and many costs are only available for the whole of Jobcentre Plus, and are not split down by individual sites. These costs therefore do not include centrally charged costs, such as information technology.

Materials Handling Equipment: Accidents

Mrs Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the Health and Safety Executive plans to publish its report into the collapse of a crane at Chandler's Wharf in Liverpool on 6 July 2009; and if he will make a statement. [28540]

Chris Grayling: Inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive have recently concluded their investigation into the incident and are now considering if legal action should be taken. Until a decision has been reached and if instituted, any legal action concluded, the Health and Safety Executive are not in a position to release a report.

State Retirement Pensions: Uprating

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has for uprating the state earnings-related pension scheme in the period to 2014-15. [28631]

Steve Webb: Additional pension paid under the state earnings-related pension scheme (SERPS) will in future years continue to be increased in line with the growth in prices in the preceding year as measured by the consumer prices index.

HEALTH

Ambulance Services

David Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to reduce the incidence of ambulance stacking attributable to a shortage of nursing staff and beds in accident and emergency departments. [28216]

Mr Simon Burns: Local health care organisations know the health care needs and priorities of their local populations. They are best placed to determine the workforce required to deliver safe patient care within their available resources.

The Department expects accident and emergency services and NHS ambulance services to be able to respond to varying workloads at different times and under varying pressures. The Department recommends that local health partners work closely together to draw up contingency arrangements to ensure that the national health service can cope efficiently and that trusts and strategic health authorities take urgent local action to ensure escalation plans include robust action to avoid ambulances queuing and therefore not to delay ambulance handover times.

Ambulance Services: Finance

David Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received on changing the ambulance funding model from a block grant to a per call-out tariff; and if he will make a statement. [28041]

Mr Simon Burns: While we have not received direct representations on this matter, departmental officials and colleagues from the national health service have worked together to develop 'currencies' for ambulance services which could form the basis of a future tariff.

The use of these currencies in the collection of ambulance service activity and cost data will be mandatory for 2011-12, with the expectation being that currencies will be used for contracting in 2012-13 with prices agreed locally.

Ambulance Services: Regulation

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions his Department has held with representatives of the private ambulance industry on the likely effect on that sector of the introduction of regulations governing it in April 2011. [28061]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department undertook a consultation in March 2008 on the scope of registration with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the registration requirements. Details of the consultation, entitled "A consultation on the framework for the registration of health and adult social care providers", and the Department's response have already been placed in the Library.

Departmental officials met representatives from the private ambulance sector in March 2009 to discuss proposed regulations on registration with CQC.

Blood: Diseases

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department plans to develop a strategy to reduce the risk posed by known and unknown pathogens to the security of the donated blood supply. [28019]

Anne Milton: The United Kingdom blood services must comply with the Blood Safety and Quality Regulation (2005), as amended. The principal measure to protect patients against transfusion-transmitted infections is the careful selection of blood donors, supplemented by specific testing for transfusion-transmitted infections.

There are well established systems in place within the UK blood services to identify, assess and respond to threats to the UK blood supply posed by known and emerging pathogens that may be transmitted by transfusion. The independent expert Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs and the National Expert Panel on New and Emerging Infections also monitor developments nationally and internationally, and provide advice to the Department and to the blood services.

A number of safety measures are in place to reduce the risk of transmission of variant Cruetzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) as there is no specific test available for screening of donors. These include lifetime deferral from donation by people who have been advised they may be at increased risk from vCJD and by those previously transfused; leucodepletion of all donated blood; the use of non-UK plasma for production of plasma products such as clotting factors; and importation of fresh frozen plasma for treatment of children under 16.

The introduction of bacterial screening of platelets provides an additional safety measure for these products.

Cataracts: Surgery

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to widen choice for patients undergoing cataract surgery in NHS facilities; and if he will make a statement. [28202]

Mr Simon Burns: We are committed to extending choice for all national health service patients and service users, including those who are referred for elective care such as cataract treatment. We are currently consulting on proposals for giving patients and service users greater choice and control over their care and we will publish our response along with more detailed policy proposals early next year.

Clostridium

Mr Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will encourage hospital trusts with high numbers of clostridium difficile infections to conduct trials of prebiotic supplements; and if he will make a statement. [28395]

Anne Milton: Participation in trials is a local decision. Trials of suitable prebiotics or other adjuncts to treatment may be considered in addition to the implementation of best practice guidance on the diagnosis and treatment of clostridium difficile infection. This guidance stresses the role of isolation of cases, hand washing with soap and water, and the use of appropriate antibiotics for treatment, together with sound antibiotic stewardship policies. These measures, unlike the use of prebiotics, have been shown to reduce infections and improve patient outcomes.

Mr Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much each hospital trust in England spent on the prevention and treatment of clostridium difficile in 2009. [28396]

Mr Simon Burns: This information is not collected centrally.

Complementary Medicine: Regulation

David Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had on statutory regulation of acupuncturists, herbalists and practitioners of Chinese medicine; and if he will make a statement. [28043]

Anne Milton: The Government are currently considering their overall strategy on professional regulation, including the possibility of establishing a registration scheme for practitioners of these traditional forms of medicine.

The Department has had discussions with the Health Professions Council, the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council and the General Pharmaceutical Council about the possibility of establishing a statutory register for herbal medicine practitioners. We are discussing policy options with the Devolved Administrations and we expect to make an announcement on the way forward shortly.

Dental Services

Mr Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the number of people not registered with a dentist in *(a)* Bradford East constituency and *(b)* England in the latest period for which figures are available. [29061]

Mr Simon Burns: Information is not available in the format requested.

Under the dental contractual arrangements, introduced on 1 April 2006, patients do not have to be registered with a national health service dentist to receive NHS care. The closest equivalent measure to 'registration' is the number of patients receiving NHS dental services ('patients seen') over a 24-month period. However, this is not directly comparable to the registration data for earlier years.

Information on the number of patients seen in the previous 24 months, in England, is available in Table D1 of Annex 3 of "NHS Dental Statistics for England—2010-11, First quarterly report". Information is available at quarterly intervals, from 31 March 2006 to 30 September 2010 and is provided by primary care trust and by strategic health authority but is not available by parliamentary constituency.

This report, published on 24 November 2010, has been already placed in the Library and is also available on the NHS Information Centre website at:

www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/dentalstats1011q1

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28111]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department is fully committed to the coalition's pledge to promote small business procurement, as set out in section 2, page 10 of the document 'The Coalition: our programme for government'.

In the financial year 2009-10, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) accounted for more than 25% of the total of suppliers to the Department and it is anticipated that a similar level of business will be awarded by the Department to SME's in 2010-11.

In addition, to further encourage and support SMEs and third-sector organisations to compete for contracts, the Department complies with the requirements of the coalition's transparency agenda by publishing online all new information and communications technology contracts and tender documents over £10,000. From January 2011, all new contracts will be published online. It is also the Department's intention to utilise an online 'contracts finder' application, which will give users greater visibility on procurement opportunities.

Departmental Manpower

Eric Ollerenshaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* names, *(b)* job titles and *(c)* qualifications are of the members of his Department's Steering Group of officials in respect of the review of prescription drug addiction. [27945]

Mr Simon Burns: The membership of the Steering Group to oversee the policy on addiction to medicines takes account of all the relevant policy areas within the Department and its arm's length bodies. It includes officials and experts representing drugs policy, mental health, pharmacy issues, the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.

In line with Freedom of Information rules the Department's policy is that the names of officials should be withheld from disclosure unless they are members of the senior civil service or have a high profile that would justify release. The names have therefore been edited accordingly.

Organisation	*Title*	*Name*
Department of Health	Deputy Director Alcohol and Drugs	Chris Heffer
Department of Health	Senior Medical Officer, Drugs and Alcohol	Dr Mark Prunty
Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency	Group Manager, Therapeutic Review	Jeremy Mean
Department of Health	Deputy National Clinical Director for Mental Health in England	Hugh Griffiths

There are six other members of the Steering Group below senior civil service level.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28143]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department sources its national press cuttings service via a framework agreement used by various Government Departments. Daily cuttings from the national press have been provided by Precise Media since 1 July 2007.

Prior to April 2010, regional press cuttings were sourced from Kantar Media Intelligence (formally known as TNS Media Intelligence) via a rolling agreement. Since April 2010, the regional press cuttings service has been provided by Precise Media.

The total amount the Department has spent on press cutting services (both national and regional cuttings) in each year since 2003-04 is provided in the following table:

Department of Health

Financial year[1]	*Spend on press cuttings*[2] *(£)*
2003-04	102,771.22
2004-05	87,932.69
2005-06	157,749.99
2006-07	186,726.95
2007-08	130,126.92
2008-09	119,180.72
2009-10	133,055.81

[1] The legal requirement for the Department to hold financial data is seven years. We are therefore unable to provide any figures before 2003-04.

[2] The figures provided are all inclusive of VAT and are based on payment date, rather than invoice date.

Depressive Illnesses: Suicide

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients with manic depression have committed suicide in each NHS trust in England in each of the last 10 years. [28802]

Paul Burstow: We do not collect such data centrally. The National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide by People with Mental Illness team at Manchester University collects data on suicide cases in mental health patients but the inquiry does not provide data by trust. Rather it publishes national data through their National Confidential Inquiry reports.

I should also refer my hon. Friend to the table I provided in the response of 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 424W, which shows a breakdown by year of the number of patients with a primary diagnosis of bipolar disorder, formerly known as manic depression, who died by suicide in the most recent 10 years for which data are available.

General Practitioners

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether board meetings of GP consortia will be held in public under his proposals for re-organisation of the NHS. [27353]

Anne Milton: General practitioner consortia will define their own governance processes within a broad legislative framework, which will be outlined in the forthcoming Health and Social Care Bill. Some consortia might choose to adopt public board meetings as part of their appropriate governance arrangements, but this will be up to them to decide.

Health Services

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether centres of excellence for the care of conditions such as diabetes will be retained after the implemention of the proposals in the Health White Paper. [27157]

Mr Simon Burns: We believe that patients should have access to high quality treatment, at the right place and at the right time. Services should be locally accessible wherever possible and centralised only where necessary, but it is for the national health service to determine the design of local services. The reforms outlined in the White Paper, "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS" will therefore liberate professionals and providers from top-down control. This will secure the quality, innovation and productivity needed to improve outcomes.

We will give responsibility for commissioning and budgets to groups of general practitioner practices; and providers will be free to shape their services around the needs and choices of patients. Any decisions about the configuration of local health services should take full account of clinical evidence, public engagement, general practitioner commissioning and referral intentions, and the current and prospective pattern of patient choice.

Health Services: South East

Mr Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effects of the work of NHS Innovations South East on the quality of health services; and if he will make a statement. [28683]

Mr Simon Burns: Responsibility for reviewing and commissioning the services provided by the nine innovation hubs (NHS Innovations) and to promote innovation in the national health service currently rests with strategic health authorities (SHAs), which will continue until March 2012.

It is a matter for South East Coast and South Central SHAs following their review of NHS Innovations South East (NISE) to decide on the value of services provided by NISE in these challenging times.

Herbal Medicine

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures are followed for testing herbal medicines before they are provided on the NHS. [27249]

Anne Milton: Manufactured herbal medicines placed on the United Kingdom market are required to have either a marketing authorisation, based on evidence of safety, quality and efficacy, or a traditional herbal registration, based on evidence of safety, quality and traditional use. Certain unlicensed herbal remedies are not required to meet specific standards: those supplied following a face-to-face consultation under section 12(1) of the Medicines Act 1968, and those supplied under section 12(2) of the Act. Section 12(2) will no longer be available following the expiry at 30 April 2011 of the transitional protection afforded by the European Directive on traditional herbal medicinal products.

Human Experiments: Nuclear Weapons

Mr Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have had their medical records flagged under the *(a)* Nuclear Weapons Tests Participants (MR1185) and *(b)* National Registry for Radiation Workers (MR47) study. [26903]

Anne Milton: The success of these epidemiological studies depends on accurate and unbiased cause of death and cancer incidence data. This information is sourced, through the National Health Service Central Registers (NHSCRs), from national registries such as cancer registries and mortality registers. The NHSCR records are flagged but medical records are neither flagged nor accessed for either of the studies. The most recent analysis reports for each study show the number of individuals in the study populations. All study members were submitted for flagging on the NHSCRs.

A total of 43,690 records (21,357 test participants and 22,333 controls) had been submitted for flagging on the NHSCRs and were reported in the 2003 Nuclear Weapons Test Participant Study analysis report. Follow up of mortality and incidence of cancer 1952-98 in men from the United Kingdom who participated in the UK's atmospheric nuclear weapon tests and experimental programmes. Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 60, 165-172 (2003). Muirhead CR, Bingham D, Haylock RGE, O'Hagan JA, Goodill AA, Berridge GLC, English MA, Hunter N and Kendall GM.

A total of 174,541 records had been submitted for flagging on the NHSCRs and were reported in the 2009 National Registry for Radiation Workers analysis report. This study population is still increasing and additional records are being flagged over time. Mortality and cancer incidence following occupational radiation exposure: 3rd analysis of the National Registry for Radiation Workers. Br J Cancer, 100, 206-12 (2009). Muirhead CR, O'Hagan JA, Haylock RGE, Phillipson MA, Willcock T, Berridge GLC and Zhang W.

Mr Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Nuclear Weapons Tests Participants medical research study MR1185 was first instigated; and what criteria were set for the flagging of medical records. [26902]

Anne Milton: In 1983, scientists from the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB, now part of the Health Protection Agency) and from the Imperial Cancer Research Fund (now Cancer Research UK) were commissioned by the Ministry of Defence to carry out an independent epidemiological study of participants in the United Kingdom atmospheric nuclear weapons tests, both in the Pacific and in Australia:

> Epidemiological studies of UK test veterans: I General Description. Journal of Radiological Protection 24 199-217; Kendall G. M., Muirhead C. R., Darby S. C., Doll R., Arnold L., O'Hagan J. A.

The success of the study depends on accurate and unbiased cause of death and cancer incidence data. This is sourced, through the National Health Service Central Registers (NHSCRs), from national registries such as cancer registries and mortality registers. The NHSCR records are flagged but medical records are neither flagged nor accessed for the study. Every individual study member was submitted for flagging with the NHSCRs.

Maternity Services

Dr Poulter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take steps to ensure that implementation of the *(a)* Toolkit for High Quality Neonatal Services and *(b)* NICE specialist neonatal care quality standard is made a local priority in the 2011-12 NHS Operating Framework. [28455]

Anne Milton: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence 'Quality Standard for Specialist Neonatal Care' and the 'Toolkit for High Quality Neonatal Services' are tools to assist national health service commissioners and providers in the provision high quality care for babies and their families.

It is too early to say what is in or out of the NHS Operating Framework for 2011-12. We are currently developing the transitional arrangements for ensuring that the NHS can deliver on the spending review settlement while remaining focused on finance, quality, performance, work force and QIPP (Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention) in the light of the NHS White Paper.

Novel Foods

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on the entry of meat and dairy products from cloned animals into the food chain. [27811]

Anne Milton: Any food obtained from cloned animals is regulated as a "novel food" under Regulation (EC) No 258/97[1]. According to this regulation, novel foods may not be marketed in the European Union without an authorisation. Applications for authorisation of novel foods are evaluated by national authorities against criteria of safety, nutritional quality and not misleading the consumer. The Food Standards Agency is the competent authority for novel foods in the United Kingdom and expert advice on applications is provided by the independent Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes. This advice would form the basis of the Agency's risk assessment which would be subject to review by all 26 other EU member states before an authorisation is issued. To date, the Agency has not received any applications for the authorisation of food produced from cloned animals.

[1] Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council concerning novel foods and novel food ingredients.

In October 2010 the European Commission published a report on animal cloning which recommended a temporary ban on the marketing of products obtained from cloned animals. The Government's view is that such a ban would be disproportionate in terms of food safety and animal welfare and insufficient evidence has been provided to justify it.

Any proposal should be supported by an impact assessment that demonstrates the need for and benefit of new regulation.

Medical Equipment: Hygiene

Mr Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the procedures of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency in respect of the regulation of the sterility of medical containers. [28659]

Mr Simon Burns: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency is the competent authority under European Union legislation for medical devices in the United Kingdom. It has responsibility for ensuring that medical devices placed on the UK market meet the requirements of the Medical Devices Regulations including those relating to sterility.

If a medical device is placed on the market as being sterile then the manufacturer must meet the relevant regulatory requirements set out in the regulations. Any assessment required under the regulations is carried out by a third party independent certification organisation known as a notified body. The agency is not part of this certification process but does designate and audit UK notified bodies as being competent to undertake this task.

Myasthenia: Drugs

Mr Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he has had discussions with BioMarin on the provision of drugs for *(a)* Lambert-Eaton myasthenic syndrome and *(b)* congenital myasthenic syndrome. [27927]

Mr Simon Burns: Departmental officials have had discussions with BioMarin about the pricing and provision of Firdapse (amifampridine) for the treatment of Lambert-Eaton myasthenic syndrome. Firdapse is not licensed for the treatment of congenital myasthenic syndrome.

Public Health: Finance

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms will be in place to ensure that the funding held by primary care trusts for public health improvement will be transferred in full to local authorities when they take responsibility for that matter; and if he will make a statement. [28197]

Mr Simon Burns: Subject to Parliament, following the abolition of primary care trusts (PCTs), responsibilities for local health improvement, and some aspects of health protection, will transfer to local authorities. A ring-fenced grant of appropriate size will be made to upper tier and unitary local authorities for this purpose. The first such grant will be made for 2013-14.

The Department has made an initial assessment of baseline spend on the areas for which Public Health England will become responsible. This is the first step in determining the size of the future ring-fenced public health budget. The Department will shortly publish a consultation, following 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People', on the details of the proposed scope, funding and commissioning responsibilities in the new public health system, including the role of local authorities.

South London Healthcare NHS Trust: Salaries

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he has made an estimate of the number of staff at South London Healthcare NHS Trust who earn over £100,000 per year. [28445]

Mr Simon Burns: This information is not held centrally.

Information in relation to remuneration for South London Healthcare NHS Trust's executive directors can be found in the trust's annual report.

Weather: Health Services

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department has taken in preparation for anticipated severe weather to ensure that *(a)* older people and *(b)* other vulnerable groups are protected; and if he will make a statement. [28199]

Paul Burstow: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer given to the hon. Member for Bolton West (Julie Hilling) on 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 168W.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28351]

John Penrose: Following the formation of the new Government and the resulting spending review, the Department announced an intention to reduce administration costs by 50% by 2014-15.

As part of this budget reduction all administration costs across the Department are subject to review, including those for hosting conferences, events and all other hospitality.

All proposals also continue to be subject to scrutiny to ensure value for money.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28116]

John Penrose: The Department has adopted a proactive approach in the past by implementing many of the recommendations made by the Glover report.

Currently, the Department works to the simplified Pre-Qualification Questionnaire issued by the Office of Government Commerce. This enables public sector purchasers to identify the most suitable suppliers to invite to tender.

All departmental contracts of £10, 000 or over awarded in the last five years have been advertised through supply2gov, who provide small businesses with visibility of public sector contract opportunities.

The Department also measures and monitors the percentage of spend with small and medium-sized enterprises against large suppliers on a yearly basis.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working within the Secretary of State's private office in each of the last five years. [28570]

John Penrose: The amount of money paid as overtime to staff working in the Secretary of State's private office in each of the last five years is set out in the table.

Financial year	*Amount of overtime spent (£)*
2009-10	11,553
2008-09	32,117
2007-08	36,553
2006-07	33,944
2005-06	35,999

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28386]

John Penrose: The Department's accounting system does not separate the printing costs of parliamentary, consultation and other official documents by type.

The table lists the Department's expenditure on printing and publications through The Stationery Office for the last 10 years.

	Cost (£)
2009-10	60,381.98
2008-09	45,695.16
2007-06	71,057.97
2006-07	54,518.23
2005-06	66,306.77
2004-05	74,964.98
2003-04	90,692.52
2002-03	94,298.60
2001-02	52,820.05
2000-01	52,988.07
1999-2000	44,599.77

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28841]

John Penrose: The amount claimed for motor mileage on departmental business in private vehicles within travel and subsistence in the UK cannot be separately identified without incurring disproportionate costs.

The Department's policy on staff travel limits claims at the HMRC approved mileage rate to official journeys which could not practically be made by public transport, or where the employee needs to use a car because of disability. Where, exceptionally, a staff member needs to use a private vehicle for any other reason, claims are paid at a reduced rate.

Horseracing Betting Levy

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport when he plans to announce the conclusions of his Department's review of remote gambling; and whether he has taken account of the effect on the Horseracing Betting Levy of the remote gambling industry in formulating those conclusions. [27722]

John Penrose: A consultation on the Regulatory Future of Remote Gambling in Great Britain closed on 18 June 2010. Since then, I have been examining the issues and identifying possible solutions.

I have also received advice from the Levy Board about securing fair contributions from overseas betting operators towards the Horserace Betting Levy.

I hope to be able to make an announcement in due course.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport if he will take steps to ensure that all areas of the betting industry contribute to the Horseracing Betting Levy. [27723]

Hugh Robertson: We are discussing the options with the Levy Board, and the racing and betting industries, to ensure that funding for racing is fair and is collected from as broad a base as possible.

Olympic Games 2012

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what discussions his Department has had with transport operators on travel from elsewhere in the UK to London for *(a)* those volunteering, *(b)* adults with paid tickets and *(c)* schoolchildren with donated tickets to the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. [28605]

Hugh Robertson: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has had no direct discussions with transport operators as these discussions take place with the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA).

The ODA is in discussion with transport operators, such as train operating companies and coach companies, to develop Olympic Service Delivery Plans (OSDP). These plans focus on the provision of additional capacity to meet the extra demand there will be at games time, including trains running earlier in the morning or later at night. More detail on these services will be announced next year.

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what discussions his Department has had with local authorities and others on accommodation for those from elsewhere in the UK in London who are *(a)* volunteering, *(b)* adults with paid tickets and *(c)* schoolchildren with donated tickets to the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. [28606]

Hugh Robertson: There are no central plans to provide volunteers or spectators with accommodation in London. However there are venues at other locations across the UK which will give people the chance to get involved with the Games in their own local area.

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) has made it clear that volunteers and spectators will be expected to find and pay for their own accommodation. This has not put people off applying to become London 2012 Games Makers, as LOCOG has received over 240,000 applications from across the UK.

The Life-Time UK Alliance, initiated by Volunteering England, is setting up discussions with voluntary organisations, which have capacities to offer accommodation for volunteers, to explore whether they could make provision within their resources for volunteers.

Olympic Games 2012: Finance

Mr Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what savings to the public purse his Department identified in the budget for the 2012 London Olympics as part of the comprehensive spending review. [29124]

Hugh Robertson: The spending review reduced the Olympic Delivery Authority's (ODA) forecast completion cost by £20 million. This saving will be achieved by no longer delivering the external "Wrap" around the Olympic Stadium, unless alternative sources of funding, or savings from other efficiencies, can be found. This decision is subject to planning conditions. The £20 million saving has been added to the contingency fund potentially available for the Olympic programme.

This cost reduction is additional to over £700 million of savings to the public purse achieved in the Olympic programme to date, including the £27 million saving announced in May 2010 as part of the in-year savings across Government.

The Government remain committed to delivering a safe and successful games within the £9.3 billion public sector funding package, and are seeking cost savings wherever possible.

Royal Parks

Nicholas Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what legislation he proposes to bring forward in respect of the Royal Parks. [26769]

John Penrose *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* It remains a Government policy to transfer responsibility of the Royal Parks to the Greater London authority and we will legislate at the first available opportunity.

Sports

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what recent assessment he has made of the relationship between the level of success at elite level sport and mass participation in sport at grassroots level; and if he will make a statement. [27407]

Hugh Robertson: The results of UK Sport's post-Beijing Sporting Preferences survey were that 18% of British adults said that the success of Team GB at the Beijing Olympics or Paralympics had led to specific changes in their participation, involvement or interest in sport.

In addition, research commissioned by Sport England in 2009 with Mike Weed from the Centre for Sport, Physical Education and Activity Research (SPEAR), entitled 'The Potential of the Demonstration Effect to Grow and Sustain Participation in Sport', concluded that people can be inspired by elite sport, sports people or sports events to participate themselves. On the issue of increasing the numbers of participants, it was found that this was mainly the case with former participants whose participation has lapsed. The study also showed that this was most effective where there was a local connection.

UK Sport is currently finalising research into the inspirational effects of major sports events, which they will publish in the new year.

Sports Cabinet

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (1) who he plans to invite to the meeting of the Sports Cabinet planned for early 2011; [27401]

(2) if he will invite representatives of School Sports Partnerships or their young ambassadors to the meeting of the Sports Cabinet planned for early 2011; [27402]

(3) what subjects will be on the agenda for the meeting of the Sports Cabinet planned for early 2011. [27403]

Hugh Robertson: The Sports Cabinet comprises the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport and the four home country Ministers with responsibility for sport, as well as the chairs of UK Sport and the home country sports councils.

Its focus is on issues affecting sport across the UK. We are working with colleagues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to finalise the agenda for the next meeting scheduled for 15 February 2011.

The Sports Cabinet is able to draw on expert advice on particular issues but there are no plans to invite representatives of school sport partnerships or young ambassadors at this stage.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Aimhigher Programme

Mr Lammy: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many *(a)* interventions were made in respect of and *(b)* people participated in the Aimhigher programme in the most recent year for which figures are available. [26651]

Mr Willetts: In the 2009-10 academic year, the latest year for which figures are available, the total number of events reported by Aimhigher partnerships was 54,544.

It is not possible to give a figure for the number of separate participants. However, in the 2009-10 academic year, the number of individual contacts totalled 2,226,580. Many participants took part in more than one activity and it is not possible to estimate the number of people helped.

In addition, the national roadshow held 4,850 sessions for approximately 70,000 learners.

The coalition Government are committed to providing a new impetus for social mobility in this country and will be investing in raising the attainment and aspiration of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Universities and schools have learned a lot from the Aimhigher programme about "what works" and can build on this in a way that best supports their pupils and students.

Animal Experiments

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he plans to ensure that the *(a)* Medical Research Council and *(b)* Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council include improving the protection of animals in their corporate and strategic aims. [28213]

Mr Willetts: The Medical Research Council (MRC) and Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) are non-departmental public bodies which receive their grant in aid from this Department. In keeping with the Haldane principle, day-to-day decisions on the scientific merits of different strategies, programmes and projects are taken by the Research Councils without Government involvement.

The MRC and BBSRC are committed to ensuring that any research programmes they fund follow high standards of animal welfare, and avoid the use of animals wherever an alternative exists. In partnership with other funders of biomedical research in the UK the MRC and BBSRC have published guidelines on "Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research" This is available from NC3R's website:

http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/document.asp?id=1319

and also from the MRC and BBSRC. Compliance with the guidelines is a condition of funding for all grants involving the use of animals.

The MRC and BBSRC are also the major funders of the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs):

www.nc3rs.org.uk

The centre provides a UK focus for the promotion, development and implementation of the 3Rs in animal research and testing, and brings together academia, industry, government and animal welfare organisations. NC3Rs aims to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas, and the translation of research findings into practice that will benefit both animals and science. The centre funds high-quality 3Rs research, organises workshops and symposia to disseminate and advance the 3Rs, and develops 3Rs information resources and guidelines.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he plans to ensure that the *(a)* Medical Research Council and *(b)* Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council prioritise reductions in expenditure on animal experiments and the development of methods that reduce and replace the use of animals in laboratory experiments. [28214]

Mr Willetts: The Medical Research Council (MRC) and Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) are non-departmental public bodies which receive their grant in aid from my Department. In keeping with the Haldane principle, day-to-day decisions on the scientific merits of different strategies, programmes and projects are taken by the Research Councils without Government involvement.

The law states that the use of animals in research where it may cause pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm, is subject to licence and will be permitted only where there is no practicable alternative. The MRC and BBSRC are committed to ensuring that any research programmes they fund follow high standards of animal welfare and avoid the use of animals wherever an alternative exists. All proposals submitted to the MRC and BBSRC are subject to robust peer review, which includes assessment of the justification for the proposed use of animals. The MRC and BBSRC are committed to supporting research which aims to refine techniques, reduce numbers, and replace animals in research wherever possible, supporting research programmes which contribute to developing new knowledge or new methods that help replace or refine animal use and in providing funding for the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs):

www.nc3rs.org.uk

Apprentices

Steve Rotheram: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what proportion of the new apprenticeships announced in his Department's paper "Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth" he expects to be in the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector; and what proportion of such apprenticeships of each type he expects to be at level (i) two, (ii) three and (iii) four. [28651]

Mr Hayes *[holding answer 3 December 2010]:* Last month, "Skills for Sustainable Growth" and "Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth" set out the Government's plans to abolish central targets and increase freedom and flexibility for Further Education colleges and training organisations to respond effectively to the needs of employers, learners and their communities. Support for employers to offer more Apprenticeships will be a key part of that response. The Apprenticeships Programme is demand-led, so the Government do not set targets for Apprenticeships by sector or level. But the Government have announced that they will increase annual funding for Apprenticeships by up to £250 million a year, so that by 2014-15 up to 75,000 more places will be available than under the previous administration.

We are committed to improving and expanding Apprenticeships, and will reshape the Apprenticeships programme so that Level 3 becomes the level to which learners and employers aspire.

Steve Rotheram: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people aged 19 years and over are taking apprenticeships at level *(a)* 2, *(b)* 3 and *(c)* 4 in 2010-11; and how many such people took apprenticeships at each level in each of the three previous years. [28654]

Mr Hayes *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: The following table shows the number of Apprenticeship Programme starts by level for learners aged 19 years and over in England for 2005/06 to 2008/09, the latest year for which full year data are available.

Apprenticeship programme starts for learners aged 19 and over by level, 2005/06 to 2008/09

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Apprenticeship (Level 2)	45,700	46,600	69,800	84,300
Advanced apprenticeship (Level 3)	29,700	32,100	47,400	56,100
Higher apprenticeship (Level 4 or higher)		100	*	100
All apprenticeships	75,500	78,800	117,200	140,600

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. ' ' Indicates a base figure of less than 50.
3. Figures are based on age at start of programme
Source:
Individualised Learner Record

This Government are committed to increasing the number of apprenticeships, in particular, advanced and higher apprenticeships. British employers currently face a work force with insufficient skills at intermediate technician and associate professional level, critical to many industries of the future.

Expanding Level 3 and Level 4 apprenticeships will make a significant contribution to remedying the shortage of people with this level of qualification.

Information on the number of apprenticeship starts is published in a quarterly statistical first release (SFR). The latest SFR was published on 16 November 2010:

http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/statistics/statisticalfirstrelease/sfr_current

Broadband

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the proportion of households in each parliamentary constituency which have access to broadband at speeds of 2 Mb or more. [29030]

Mr Vaizey: This Department has not published estimates by constituency. According to the Digital Britain report published in 2009 approximately 11% of households do not have access to broadband at speeds of 2 Mbps or more.

Broadband Delivery UK is assessing current broadband provision at community level across the UK in its work to deliver the coalition Government's objective to facilitate universal broadband access of at least 2 Mbps.

Broadband: Rural Areas

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps he is taking to support sub-loop unbundling to increase broadband competition in rural areas. [26409]

Mr Vaizey: Sub-loop unbundling (SLU) is a regulated product offered by BT Openreach. Take-up of SLU is first and foremost a matter for Openreach and its customers, with Ofcom able to intervene if necessary.

I have had discussions with communications service providers, Ofcom and BT Openreach regarding this subject and will play a facilitative role where there are issues that need to be addressed in discussion between the parties.

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what financial assistance is available to *(a)* individuals and *(b)* community groups in rural areas who wish to be connected to broadband services. [28315]

Mr Vaizey: The coalition Government have committed £530 million in the recently announced comprehensive spending review (CSR) to support broadband rollout, including a standard level of service for all. Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) is in the process of assessing the models for commercial deployment of broadband with public support in commercially challenging/rural areas and will be working with local government bodies, such as county councils on models for local delivery of broadband.

Broadband: Wales

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what his most recent estimate is of the level of access to broadband in Wales; and what steps his Department is taking to increase that level. [28322]

Mr Vaizey: This Department has not published estimates. However, according to the most recent Ofcom Communications Market Report published in August, broadband delivered over a standard fixed telephony line is also available to all homes and commercial properties in Wales, as all local exchanges in Wales are DSL-enabled. But various factors (such as line length and contention) influence the actual broadband speed at customer premises. Broadband take-up in Wales has risen to 64% of homes but this still lags behind the UK average of 71%.

Broadband Delivery UK is assessing current broadband provision at community level across the UK in its work to deliver the Coalition Government's objective to facilitate universal broadband in the UK.

The Government aim to stimulate private sector investment to deliver the best superfast broadband network in Europe by 2015. Broadband Delivery UK is working with the Welsh Assembly Government to bring the benefits of superfast broadband investment to Wales.

Consumer Direct

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people contacted Consumer Direct in each of the last five years; and how many such contacts related to debt and consumer finance issues. [28063]

Mr Davey: The following table details the required information.

	All contacts[1] (Thousand)	*Unique contacts[2]*	*Unique contacts regarding credit and debt*	*Percentage of credit/debt unique contacts*
2006	1,100	979,176	14,518	1.5
2007	1,600	1,141,691	18,615	1.6
2008	1,700	1,181,279	22,988	1.9
2009	1,700	1,142,320	29,653	2.6
2010[3]	1,100	1,013,278	29,145	2.9
Total	7,200	5,457,744	114,919	2.1

[1] All contacts to the service even if they are from the same person about the same issue.
[2] One record per issue from a consumer.
[3] To date.

Credit

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what proposals to improve access to affordable credit he has considered. [28316]

Mr Davey: Well-informed, empowered consumers are central to our vision for how a credit market between customers and lenders should work. I want to encourage both to take responsible decisions and to strengthen protection where necessary, particularly for the most vulnerable. Earlier this year I announced a joint BIS and HM Treasury review of consumer credit and personal insolvency that will look at all aspects of the consumer credit lifecycle from the decision to take out a loan through the lifetime of the loan.

The review will also provide a framework for us to consider how best to take forward the recommendations from the recent OFT review of the high cost credit market. Among those being considered are that the Government should work with lenders to provide information on high-cost credit loans through price comparison websites, and that the Government work with credit reference agencies to explore ways in which high cost credit lenders could provide information to credit reference agencies on the payment performance of their customers, allowing those with good payment records to use mainstream lenders more easily in the future.

Government are also firmly supportive of a stronger link up between the Post Office and credit unions and we are actively looking into ways the two can work more closely together. For example, Post Office Ltd plans to share guidance with sub-postmasters shortly to demonstrate how they can work with local credit unions.

Financial Services: Regulation

Harriett Baldwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether his Department has assessed the likely effects on *(a)* small businesses and *(b)* independent financial advisers of the Financial Services Authority's proposals to implement the recommendations of the Retail Distribution Review. [27915]

Mr Hoban: I have been asked to reply.

The Financial Services Authority (FSA), an independent body, is introducing the Retail Distribution Review (RDR). The FSA has consulted extensively on the RDR since 2006 and in accordance with the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, has published cost-benefit analyses of the proposals.

The FSA has also published analysis of the impact of its proposals on different sectors of the industry alongside policy documents, including research by Deloitte and Oxera, as well as a survey from NMG Consulting which asked specific questions about the impact of the changes on sole traders. This information is available on the FSA's website.

Higher Education: Finance

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the effect of the Government's proposals for higher education funding on the international competitiveness of universities in *(a)* England and *(b)* Oxford West and Abingdon constituency. [27976]

Mr Willetts: The UK higher education system is already recognised as world class and internationally competitive. The reforms we are proposing seek to build on and strengthen that position. In particular we expect that increased student choice will improve quality and drive up standards. This country is already a popular destination for international students, second only to the United States, and we expect that to continue as the student experience improves. Our reforms will put university funding on to a more sustainable footing which will benefit institutions in Oxford West and Abingdon and across the country.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much his Department plans to spend on higher education in each year to 2014-15; and what estimate he has made of the level of such expenditure under the current arrangements for higher education funding in each such year. [29125]

Mr Willetts: Funding for the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) for 2011-12 will be published in its annual grant letter before Christmas this year.

Funding for subsequent years will be announced in due course.

National Union of Students

Conor Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will place in the Library a copy of the accounts of the National Union of Students for each of the last five years. [28181]

Mr Willetts: The Department does not hold this information. The accounts of the National Union of Students will be available from the organisation itself.

Regional Growth Fund

Grahame M. Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills with reference to paragraph 4.8 of the Local Growth White Paper, Cm 7981, from what budget headings the funding from other departmental budgets to increase the regional growth fund will be drawn. [22706]

Danny Alexander: I have been asked to reply.

As set out in "Local Growth: realising every place's potential", published on 28 October 2010, funding for the regional growth fund will be drawn from the Department for Transport, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Royal Mail: Greater London

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what plans he has for the future of the East London Mail Centre; and if he will make a statement. [28914]

Mr Davey: Decisions relating to the East London Mail Centre are an operational matter for Royal Mail.

I have therefore asked Moya Greene, the Chief Executive of Royal Mail, to respond directly to the hon. Member and a copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Social Enterprises

Martin Vickers: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what information his Department holds on the number of social enterprises established in the last 10 years; and what information it holds on the proportion of such enterprises which have continued to operate after three years. [28541]

Mr Prisk: BIS does not hold information on the number of social enterprises established in the last 10 years. It also does not hold information on the proportion of such enterprises which have continued to operate after three years.

BIS does produce estimates of the number of social enterprises in the UK. Latest estimates are that there are around 60,000 social enterprises with employees in the UK—around 5% of all SMEs with employees.

More information on social enterprises can be found in the BIS report "Social Enterprise Barometer February 2010" at:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/enterprise/docs/s/10-1076-social-enterprise-barometer-feb-2010

Student Unions

Conor Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) if he will place in the Library copies of the financial reports of each student union which have been made available to governing bodies in accordance with section 22(2)(h) of the Education Act 1994 since the implementation of that Act; [28180]

(2) what steps he classifies as reasonably practicable for the purposes of complying with the requirements provided for in section 22(2) of the Education Act 1994; [28182]

(3) what guidance on *(a)* secondary legislation and *(b)* compliance his Department and its predecessors have provided to (i) governing bodies and (ii) students' unions in respect of section 22 of the Education Act 1994; [28183]

(4) what the name and address is of each independent person appointed by each higher education institution governing body to investigate and report on complaints from students on their union in accordance with section 22(2)(m) of the Education Act 1994; [28186]

(5) if he will place in the Library copies of publications by each higher education institution that bring to the attention of students those matters listed in section 22(5) of the Education Act 1994 for the most recent period in which such publications are available; [28188]

(6) what steps his Department and its predecessors have taken to ensure compliance by *(a)* governing bodies and *(b)* students' unions with the provisions of section 22(1) to (5) of the Education Act 1994 on requirements to be observed in relation to students' unions; [28189]

(7) whether his Department has been informed of an infringement of the requirements of *(a)* section 22(1), *(b)* section 22(2)(a), *(c)* section 22(2)(b), *(d)* section 22(2)(e), *(e)* section 22(2)(f), *(f)* section 22(2)(g), *(g)* section 22(2)(h), *(h)* section 22(2)(i), *(i)* section 22(2)(j), *(j)* section 22(2)(k), *(k)* section 22(1)(i), *(l)* section 22(2)(m), *(m)* section 22(2)(n), *(n)* section 22(2)(c)(i), *(o)* section 22(2)(c)(ii), *(p)* section 22(3), *(q)* section 22(4) or *(r)* section 22(5) of the Education Act 1994 in the last 10 years; [28190]

(8) if he will place in the Library a copy of each publication published by each higher education institution governing body bringing to the attention of students those matters listed in sections 22(4)(b) and 22(4)(c) of the Education Act 1994; [28338]

(9) if he will place in the Library a copy of each code of practice published by each higher education institution governing body in accordance with section 22(3)(b) of the Education Act 1994 since the implementation of that Act. [28339]

Mr Willetts: The Department does not hold copies of the reports, publications or codes of practice requested. They would need to be requested from the relevant higher education institution or student union, as appropriate. Nor does the Department hold details of the independent persons referred to in section 22(2)(m) of the Education Act 1994.

Higher education institutions, as autonomous organisations, are themselves responsible for determining what steps they need to take to ensure compliance with any relevant piece of legislation which applies to them. As far as records show, the Department has not been informed of any infringements of these provisions of the Education Act 1994. Nor has the Department issued guidance on (a) secondary legislation or (b) compliance in respect of section 22. Any infringement of legislation would be a matter for the courts to consider.

Conor Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he plans to bring forward proposals to make *(a)* student unions and *(b)* external organisations affiliated to student unions subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [28618]

Mr Willetts: There are no plans to make *(a)* students' unions or *(b)* external organisations affiliated to students' unions subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Police Officer Numbers

18. **Susan Elan Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the change in the number of police officers in England and Wales between March 1997 and March 2010. [28285]

Nick Herbert: On 31 March 2010 there were 142,132 police officers, compared with 125,825 on 31 March 1997.

National DNA Database

19. **Dr Thérèse Coffey:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by what date she expects DNA records of people not charged with a crime to have been removed from the national DNA database. [28286]

Mrs May: The Government are committed to restoring the rights of individuals, particularly the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. We will bring forward proposals for a more proportionate DNA retention regime in the new year. This will adopt the protections of the Scottish model. We will remove the vast majority of unconvicted people from the National DNA Database as soon as possible after Parliament has agreed to our proposals.

We are also taking steps to ensure that the database will, for the first time, hold the profiles of all serving prisoners and all those previously convicted of serious crimes, rather than wasting resources on the retention of the DNA of innocent people.

Security Threats

20. **Richard Graham:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what methodology her Department follows to determine the nature of security threats to the UK. [28287]

Mrs May: As part of the Government's National Security Strategy, we conducted a National Security Risk Assessment. This is the first time that Government have ever undertaken a comprehensive assessment of all national security risks to the UK. The most important risks were then placed into three tiers to inform the strategic defence and security review.

Police Community Support Officers

21. **Graham Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions she has had with police forces on the likely number of police community support officers at the end of 2014-15. [28288]

Nick Herbert: The number of police officers is not set by central Government, but we believe that forces can make savings to ensure that visible and available policing is secured for the public.

Licensing

22. **Natascha Engel:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans she has to review the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003. [28289]

Mrs May: The Government's proposals for amendments to the Licensing Act were outlined in our response to the consultation on "Rebalancing the Licensing Act", which was published on 1 December. Many of these measures will be introduced through legislation included in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill, which was introduced on 30 November.

Crime: Alcoholic Drinks

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many recorded crimes attributable to alcohol per 1,000 crimes there were in *(a)* each local authority in Wiltshire, *(b)* Wiltshire and *(c)* England in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; and what the cost to the public purse was of such crime in each such area in each such year. [28037]

James Brokenshire *[holding answer 1 December 2010]*: Data relating to police recorded crime where alcohol is an attributable factor are not collected centrally and could be collated only at disproportionate cost.

The total number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for alcohol-related offences, and the number of alcohol related offences per 1,000 prosecutions for all offences, in the Wiltshire police force area and England, from 2000-09 can be viewed in following table. Court proceedings data for 2010 are planned for publication in spring 2011.

These figures cover the Wiltshire police force area because data held on the Ministry of Justice's Court Proceedings Database are not available at local authority area level.

Total number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for alcohol-related offences[1] and number per 1,000 prosecutions for all offences, Wiltshire police force area and England, 2000-09[2,3]

Area	Number of defendants									
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
England										
Total proceeded against for alcohol-related offences	108,281	107,549	114,039	117,245	110,501	102,218	101,614	99,979	93,726	91,503
per 1,000 proceeded against for all offences	61	63	63	63	59	58	61	62	61	58
of which:										
Wiltshire police force area										
Total proceeded against for alcohol-related offences	1,232	1,301	1,290	1,437	1,340	1,232	1,136	895	787	712
per 1,000 proceeded against for all offences	64	64	60	60	59	54	54	45	46	37

[1] Includes offences of:
(a) Drunkenness simple.
(b) Drunkenness with aggravation.
(c) Offences by licenced person.
(d) Other offences against intoxicating liquor laws.
(e) Driving after consuming alcohol or taking drugs.
(f) Causing death by careless driving whilst under the influence of drink or drugs.

[2] The figures given in the table on court proceedings relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[3] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

Source:
Justice Statistics Analytical Services - Ministry of Justice.

Departmental Redundancy

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff of *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies have been offered enhanced early retirement packages in each of the last three years. [22027]

Nick Herbert: In accordance with Cabinet Office guidance and in the knowledge that the Superannuation Bill will remove the option for enhanced benefits, the Home Office and its agencies (UK Border Agency, Criminal Records Bureau and Identity and Passport Service) have offered no enhanced terms in the recent voluntary early departure scheme. The figures for previous years are in the following table:

	Staff leaving with enhanced terms								
	2007-08			2008-09			2009-10		
Employer name	*CER*	*FER*	*Total*	*CER*	*FER*	*Total*	*CER*	*FER*	*Total*
Criminal Records Bureau	—	—	0	—	1	1	—		0
Identity and Passport Service	—	2	2	26		26		10	10
Main Home Office (including UKBA)	3	11	14	—	91	91	3	83	86
Total	3	13	16	26	92	118	3	93	96

Key:
CER—Compulsory early retirement
FER—Flexible early retirement
UKBA—United Kingdom Border Agency

Departmental Sponsorship

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what expenditure *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [27525]

Nick Herbert: Expenditure incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for the Department and the non-departmental public bodies cannot be given without incurring disproportionate cost.

The exception is spend that has been identified for the Identity and Passport Service in relation the National Identity Service and is shown in the following table. Records are unable to be identified of any sponsorship activity earlier than 2008, and to do so would also incur disproportionate costs.

	Amount spent (£)
2010	0
2009	63,737.50
2008	10,868.75

Detention Centres: Croydon

Malcolm Wicks: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she plans to establish an immigration detention centre in Croydon; and if she will make a statement. [28136]

Damian Green *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* There are no current plans to establish an immigration removal centre in Croydon.

Drugs

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she plans to review the effects of the international treaties on drugs to which the UK is a signatory on the scope of UK legislation on drugs. [28535]

James Brokenshire *[holding answer 3 December 2010]:* The UK is currently a signatory to all three UN drug conventions: the single convention on narcotic drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 protocol; the convention on psychotropic substances of 1971; and the convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances of 1988.

The Home Office has no plans to review the effects of international treaties on drugs to which the UK is a signatory.

Drugs are a global problem. A co-ordinated international response is vital in our commitment to tackle drug misuse. The UK's Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 implements the provisions of the UN conventions on drugs to which we are signatories, and continues to provide a coherent legal framework.

Drugs: Crime

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her most recent estimate is of the size of the illicit drug market. [27959]

James Brokenshire *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* The most recent estimate by the Home Office of the size of the UK illicit drugs market was published in 2006, which estimated the value of the UK illicit drug market at between £4-£6.6 billion for the reference year 2003-04. This report is available on the Home Office website at:

http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/rdsolr1606.pdf

and I will place a copy in the Library.

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the proportion of acquisitive crime which was drug-related in each of the last five years. [28084]

James Brokenshire *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* The last estimate for the proportion of acquisitive crime which is drug-related was published in 2005. This estimated that between one-third and a half of acquisitive crime was related to use of class A drugs. This report, 'Measuring the harm from illegal drugs using the Drug Harm Index', is available on the Home Office website at:

http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/rdsolr2405.pdf

and I will place a copy in the Library.

Entry Clearances: EU Nationals

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when she expects to make a decision on the application for a residence card as a family member of a European Economic Area national of the constituent of the hon. Member for Torbay, Ms Maria Bellucci (CTS Reference: B29682/9), and what steps she is taking to reduce the time taken to process such applications. [28392]

Damian Green: The Home Office would not usually publicly discuss details of an individual's case. However, if my hon. Friend would care to write to me, I will provide an update on Ms Bellucci's status.

The UK Border Agency (UKBA) has introduced a package of measures to speed up the consideration of applications for residence cards. UKBA has increased case working resources, restructured staff training, and put new case monitoring systems in place. These measures have allowed UKBA to reduce processing times for residence cards applications to under five months.

Entry Clearances: Overseas Students

Charlotte Leslie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans she has for the future of the student visa system. [28280]

Damian Green: As the Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) announced in her statement to Parliament of 23 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 169-71, the Government will shortly launch a public consultation on proposed changes to the student visa arrangements. The proposals will result in a more selective system and reduce the numbers to support our aim of reducing net migration to sustainable levels.

Fixed Penalties

Simon Hart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fixed penalty notices in each category have been issued in the last two years. [28733]

James Brokenshire: Data on the number of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for motoring offences (held by the Home Office), disorder offences (provided by the Ministry of Justice) and environmental offences (held by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) are provided in the following tables.

The data provided are for the two most recent years for which data are available for each series.

Detailed data on motoring FPNs and penalty notices for disorder are available in the Library of the House. Web links are as follows:

For motoring fixed penalties:

Police Powers and Procedures – England and Wales 2008-09 and 2007-08 – chapter 3 – Fed Penalty notices

http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/police-powers.html

For penalty notices for disorder (PNDs):

Criminal Statistics, England and Wales 2009, Supplementary Tables – chapter 2, table 2.1

http://www.justice.gov.uk/criminalannual.htm

Data for environmental FPNs are not published in official statistical bulletins, however data for England can be found at the following web link:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/docs/data/index.htm

Data for Wales are published by the Welsh Government, available via the following web link.

http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/epq/cleanneighbour/fixedpenalty/0809/?lang=en

Number of fixed penalty notices issued in England and Wales by category and year[1]

Table 1: Motoring and environmental penalty notices

	Number of motoring FPNs issued	*Number of environmental FPNs issued*
2007-08	2,599,983	42,241
2008-09	2,289,778	45,076

Table 2: Penalty notices for disorder

	Number issued
2008	176,164
2009	170,393

[1] Data provided for the two most recent years available for each series. Updates for all data series for more recent years will be published during 2011.

Hemp: Licensing

George Freeman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the effect on industrial growers of hemp of recent changes to licences for that activity under the provisions of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. [28282]

James Brokenshire: My officials have met with hemp growers, hemp industry representatives, and the National Farmers Union to discuss licensing arrangements that met their needs while conforming to the requirements of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and our international obligations under UN Conventions. The Home Office is currently reviewing licensing arrangements for industrial hemp with Business, Innovation and Skills, Department of Energy and Climate Change and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Human Trafficking

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans she has to involve the third sector in formulating policy to reduce the incidence of human trafficking. [28174]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking.

We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

Immigration: Appeals

Andrew Percy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many appeals before the Immigration and Asylum tribunal were adjourned because no representative of her Department was present in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [27762]

Damian Green *[holding answer 1 December 2010]:* The number of appeals which were adjourned because no Home Department representative was present (in each of the last five years for which figures are available) are:

Adjournments where no Home Office representative was present (percentage of all adjournments)

	AIT immigration judge stage		*AIT reconsideration stage*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
2005-06	51	0.44	9	0.28
2006-07	86	0.75	12	0.28
2007-08	47	0.56	20	0.47
2008-09	77	0.85	11	0.32
2009-10	92	1.02	20	0.54

Note:

The percentage figures show the percentage of the total adjournments for the year.

On 15 February 2010, the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal became part of the unified Tribunal system. The Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) Immigration Judge stage is equivalent to the First-Tier Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber) and the AIT reconsideration stage is equivalent to the Upper Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber).

The statistical information provided is taken from locally held management information provided by the Tribunals Service. This information has not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols and its validity is completely reliant on the quality and timeliness of the information held on the database.

Andrew Percy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are being taken to increase the level of her Department's representation at appeals before the Immigration and Asylum Tribunal. [27766]

Damian Green *[holding answer 1 December 2010]:* There is a difference in representation rates between the first-tier Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber) and the Upper Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber) where all hearings are represented. At the first-tier appeal, hearings are prioritised for representation initially on the basis of harm.

There are a number of initiatives to increase representation at the first-tier Tribunal. We are currently in the process of training asylum case-owners to handle a wider range of appeal types. This will provide a flexible resource whereby case-owners can be utilised to increase overall representation in court.

Work is also under way looking at how UK Border Agency can balance its presenting resource with the demand for appeals in regional hearing centres. We are working with the Tribunals Service looking at the forecasted volume and location of hearings to ensure that ties up with UK Border Agency's available resource.

Other work has also been undertaken recently to analyse the productivity of our presenting resources with the aim of identifying ways to improve performance through introducing new working practices, some of which will be driven through modernising our IT systems.

Members: Correspondence

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when she plans to respond to the letter from the right and learned hon. Member for Camberwell and Peckham dated 8 October 2010 on police numbers in Southwark. [27737]

Nick Herbert: I refer the right hon. and learned Lady to my letter of 30 November 2010, and will place a copy of that letter in the Library.

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when she plans to reply to the letter of 7 September 2010 from the hon. Member for Torbay on his constituent, P. Griffith. [28391]

James Brokenshire: I refer my hon. Friend to my letter of 6 December 2010, and will place a copy of that letter in the Library.

National Police Improvement Agency

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements she plans to make for the undertaking of the functions of the National Police Improvement Agency after its closure. [27716]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office is currently working with the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA), and the wider police service, to determine the most appropriate arrangements for those functions that will continue after the NPIA is phased out.

Police: Accountability

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements she plans to put in place for scrutiny of elected police commissioners. [27778]

Nick Herbert: In paragraph 2.16 of our response to the consultation on "Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting police and the people", we state

> "We are keen to encourage independent candidates to stand for election alongside those candidates supported by the main political parties. In partnership with the Electoral Commission we will embark on a programme of activity which seeks to raise public awareness of Police and Crime Commissioners to secure a healthy voter turn out, and to encourage independent candidates to represent their communities."

Police Community Support Officers

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether responsibility for determining the number of police community support officers (PCSOs) will rest with proposed police commissioners; and who will decide in March 2012 how many PCSOs are to be *(a)* retained and *(b)* funded; [27777]

(2) what plans she has for funding of police community support officers after March 2012. [27712]

Nick Herbert: Decisions on the neighbourhood policing fund will be announced shortly when provisional policing settlements will be placed before the House.

Timber

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the compliance of her Department with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber. [27846]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office actively seeks to procure timber and wood derived products originating from either legal and sustainable or Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade licensed or equivalent sources. This is in line with UK Government timber procurement policy.

TREASURY

Capital Gains Tax

Mr Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of *(a)* increasing and *(b)* reducing the capital gains tax annual exempt amount by £5,000. [27589]

Mr Gauke: HMRC holds limited data on individuals with gains below the annual exempt amount (AEA) due to reporting requirements. Estimating the behavioural response to large increases or decreases in the AEA is exceptionally difficult as there is little direct evidence and conflicting arguments about potential responses. Therefore estimates can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Estimates of the revenue implications of small increases to the annual exempt amount for the new CGT regime will be available in Table 1.6 (Direct effects of illustrative changes tax changes) on the HMRC website from 31 December 2010.

Child Benefit

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his Department undertook an equalities impact assessment in respect of his proposal to withdraw child benefit from households with one higher rate tax-payer; and if he will make a statement. [18205]

Mr Gauke: HM Treasury has considered the equalities impact of the change to child benefit. The Government published an 'overview of the impact of Spending Review 2010 on equalities' alongside the spending review document. This document considers the overall impact of the spending review on groups protected by equalities legislation and it can be found at:

http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/sr2010_equalities.pdf

Conflict Prevention: Finance

Yvette Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much funding from his Department was allocated to the Conflict Pool in *(a)* 2008-09, *(b)* 2009-10 and *(c)* 2010-11. [27265]

Danny Alexander *[holding answer 29 November 2010]*: The Conflict Pool was created in 2009 by the previous Government by merging the Conflict Prevention Pool and Stabilisation Aid Fund. In 2010-11—the first full year of its existence—the Conflict Pool has a budget of £229 million.

Departmental Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent estimate he has made of the number of questions to his Department tabled in *(a)* the House of Commons and *(b)* the House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar Questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available. [28006]

Justine Greening: No such estimate has been made.

Employment: Scotland

Margaret Curran: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of people likely to be employed in the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* Glasgow and *(c)* Glasgow East constituency in each of the next five years. [27772]

Danny Alexander *[holding answer 2 December 2010]*: The Treasury has not made estimates of employment for the public and private sectors in Scotland, Glasgow and Glasgow East. In devolved areas it is for the Scottish Government to make its own decisions and assessments of the employment effects of its policies. The latest forecasts for the whole of the UK were published by the Office of Budget Responsibility on 29 November.

Financial Services: International Co-operation

Lorely Burt: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the Government are taking to ensure that consumer protection in financial services forms part of the work of the G20 to address the global financial crisis. [27917]

Justine Greening: At the G20 Summit in Seoul on 11-12 November, where the Prime Minister represented the UK, G20 leaders asked the relevant international institutions to explore

> "options to advance consumer finance protection through informed choice that includes disclosure, transparency and education; protection from fraud, abuse and errors; and recourse and advocacy".

They have been asked to report back by the next summit. The Summit Declaration can be found at

http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/summits.html

Lorely Burt: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his policy is on establishing an expert group to report to the G20 summit in 2011 to deliver recommendations on supporting effective financial consumer protection around the world. [28071]

Justine Greening: At the G20 summit in Seoul on 11-12 November, where the Prime Minister represented the UK, G20 leaders "asked the Financial Stability Board (FSB) to work in collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other international organisations to explore, and report back by the next summit, on options to advance consumer finance protection...". The G20 will consider next steps once the FSB has completed its report. The Summit Declaration can be found at:

http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/summits.html

Mortgages

Harriett Baldwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the regulatory effect of the proposals on mortgage lending made by *(a)* the Financial Services Authority and *(b)* the European Commission. [27910]

Mr Hoban: The Government are committed to a healthy housing and mortgage market.

The Financial Services Authority (FSA) is conducting a wholesale review of mortgage regulation in the UK, the 'Mortgage Market Review'.

The Government believe that it is right for the FSA to ensure that the UK mortgage market has responsible lending practices. We will continue to work with the FSA, mortgage lenders and intermediaries, and consumer groups to ensure a mortgage market that is sustainable for all participants.

The FSA published 'Mortgage Market Review: Responsible Lending' in July. This paper forms one part of an ongoing consultation process.

The FSA has stated that they will fully assess the potential impact on the market before implementing any rule changes.

The European Commission has not yet announced any proposals on responsible lending. Should any proposals be put forward the Secretariat General requires that all Commission initiatives with significant impacts be supported by an impact assessment.

Mr Marcus Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his policy is on fiscal measures to assist first-time homebuyers who decide to commit a large proportion of their income in mortgage payments in order to get onto the property ladder. [27987]

Mr Hoban: First-time buyers of residential property worth up to £250,000 can claim relief from stamp duty land tax (SDLT) on the purchase of their first home. The relief is available for two years and will expire on 24 March 2012.

The Government have committed to review this relief, taking into account its impact on affordability and value for money.

Mr Marcus Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate he has made of the number of borrowers who may not be able to take out remortgages following the introduction of the Financial Services Authority's proposals for the mortgage market; and if he will bring forward fiscal measures to assist such borrowers; [27988]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of mortgages granted since 2005 which would not have been issued under the Financial Services Authority's proposals for the mortgage market; [27989]

(3) what assessment he has made of the likely regulatory burden arising from responsible mortgage lending proposals made by *(a)* the Financial Services Authority and *(b)* the European Commission; [27990]

(4) if he will take steps to ensure that *(a)* self-employed homebuyers and *(b)* other homebuyers with variable incomes will be able to obtain mortgages under the Financial Services Authority's proposals for the mortgage market. [27992]

Mr Hoban: The Government are committed to a healthy housing and mortgage market.

The Financial Services Authority (FSA) is conducting a wholesale review of mortgage regulation in the UK, the 'Mortgage Market Review'.

The Government believe that it is right for the FSA to ensure that the UK mortgage market has responsible lending practices. We will continue to work with the FSA, mortgage lenders and intermediaries, and consumer groups to ensure a mortgage market that is sustainable for all participants.

The FSA published 'Mortgage Market Review: Responsible Lending' in July. This paper forms one part of an ongoing consultation process.

The FSA has stated that it will fully assess the potential impact on the market before implementing any rule changes.

The European Commission has not yet announced any proposals on responsible lending. Should any proposals be put forward, the Secretariat General requires that all Commission initiatives with significant impacts be supported by an impact assessment.

Private Finance Initiative

Andrea Leadsom: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to encourage local private finance initiative providers to renegotiate the terms of their contracts with local public bodies for the purpose of taking into account the effects on them of changes in the economic situation since those contracts were first negotiated. [28246]

Danny Alexander *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* The Treasury continues to recommend that local authorities seek value for money in PFI contracts. Guidance on where value for money savings may be made within existing PFI contracts and where renegotiation is unlikely to provide value for money will be set out in due course. Treasury officials have met with a number of major equity holders in PFI contracts to discuss options for savings.

Public Expenditure

Dr Francis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he took to ensure that the outcomes of the comprehensive spending review were compliant with the *(a)* Human Rights Act 1998 and *(b)* Equality Act 2010; and if he will make a statement. [20054]

Danny Alexander: The Treasury takes equalities matters very seriously. Policy makers are aware that all policies have to be Human Rights Act compliant and legal advice will be sought where there are concerns. In addition, where a measure resulting from the spending review requires primary legislation it will be accompanied by a statement under section 19 of the Act as to compatibility.

There are currently statutory obligations on Government Departments to have regard to promoting equality in regard to gender, race and disability when considering policy changes.

The 2010 Equality Act does not fully come into force until April 2011.

Whether or not a full equality impact assessment will be carried out in any case depends on the likely impact of a proposed policy on members of the relevant groups of people and whether it would be proportionate and possible to do so.

On 20 October 2010 the Treasury published an overview of the impact of the spending review on groups protected by equalities legislation.

However, the Treasury does not dictate the details of how other Departments will live within their settlements—this will be for Departments to decide themselves. Other Government Departments will ensure that equality and human rights considerations are taken into account when these decisions are made. Decisions about the publication of Equality Impact Assessments are also for individual Departments to make.

With regard to its own spending, the Treasury will ensure that equalities are taken into account as policies are developed following the spending review, in line with its legal obligations.

Public Expenditure: Wales

Jessica Morden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the likely effects of the outcome of the comprehensive spending review on women in Wales. [29053]

Danny Alexander: The Treasury had a role to play in assessing the impact of public expenditure reductions as a whole during the spending review process. The Treasury made a qualitative assessment of the likely impact of the spending review on different groups using the information that is currently available, and these assessments were considered when decisions were made. Further assessments will be made by Departments themselves as they make decisions about the allocation of resources to different policy areas.

The Government have not made an assessment of the likely effects of the outcome of the spending review on women in Wales. The role of the Treasury in making decisions about public expenditure in devolved areas of spending is to allocate resources. It is then up to these areas to decide how best to manage these resources. In devolved areas of spending it is for the Welsh Assembly Government to conduct their own equality impact assessments of policy proposals, in line with their legal obligations.

The Treasury published the document, "Overview of Equalities Impacts of the Spending Review on Equalities" alongside the spending review announcement.

Public Sector: Redundancy

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish his Department's impact assessment of the likely effects of reductions in the number of public sector jobs in areas where the private sector is classified as underdeveloped. [28164]

Danny Alexander: The United Kingdom faces the largest peacetime deficit in our history. The public sector paybill accounts for around half of departmental resource spending, so deficit reduction will inevitably impact on the public sector workforce. However, not tackling the deficit would be the worst thing for jobs in the medium term, across the public and private sector

It will be for individual employers to determine the exact workforce implications of their settlements.

The Treasury published information on actions being taken to encourage growth across the country, and how each region will benefit from schemes announced in the spending review, including capital investment programmes. This information is available online at

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spend_sr2010_regions.htm

Rescue Services: Helicopters

Michael Dugher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether the budgetary settlement agreed by his Department with the Ministry of Defence included an assumption that a proportion of the costs of the SAR (H) programme would be borne by the Ministry of Defence; [26337]

(2) whether his Department has been asked to approve a transfer of resources between the Ministry of Defence and Department for Transport as a result of the proposal to de-militarise the Search and Rescue (Helicopter) programme; [26657]

(3) whether the Ministry of Defence departmental expenditure limit he announced in the comprehensive spending review will be changed as a result of the proposal to de-militarise the Search and Rescue (Helicopter) programme; and if he will make a statement. [26673]

Danny Alexander *[holding answer 25 November 2010]*: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer the Under-Secretary of State for Defence, my hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr Robathan) gave the right hon. Member for Coventry North East (Mr Ainsworth), on 19 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 967W.

Revenue and Customs: Complaints

David Morris: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs received in each of the last five years. [28171]

Mr Gauke: Complaints information for the last five years is published in HMRC Annual Reports for 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09 and the HMRC Departmental Accounts for 2009-10. The information is reported on an annual basis and is available from the HMRC website:

www.hmrc.gov.uk/about/reports.htm

Revenue and Customs: Manpower

Mr Hanson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many compliance officers HM Revenue and Customs had on 5 April 2010; and how many he expects there to be on the same date in *(a)* 2011 and *(b)* 2012; [26007]

(2) how he proposes to allocate the funding his Department has announced for measures to reduce tax evasion; [26035]

(3) how much revenue which would otherwise have been lost through *(a)* tax avoidance and *(b)* fraud his Department has recovered in (i) 2008-09 and (ii) 2009-10; and how much he expects to recover in (A) 2011-12 and (B) 2012-13. [26110]

Mr Gauke: Reducing tax loss, whether it stems from avoidance or evasion, is a key priority for this Government and we have recently announced that £900 million will be made available over the spending review period, to enable HMRC to step-up its activity in tackling tax loss to bring in £7 billion additional benefits per annum by 2014-15.

HM Revenue and Customs deployed approximately 31,000 staff across all grades at 31 March 2010 on a variety of compliance activities including risk assessment, addressing inaccurate returns and verifying repayment claims, debt collection and criminal investigations across all heads of duty. We estimate that at 31 March 2011 there will be approximately 29,000 compliance staff. HMRC are expected to find resource savings of 15% through the better use of new technology, greater efficiency and better IT contracts. HMRC are not able to provide estimates for 2012 yet.

HMRC are currently working on business plans which will be published in spring 2011. These will include for example a new team to crack down on offshore tax evasion and additional criminal investigations to increase the number of criminal prosecutions.

The additional tax liability (including penalties and interest) resulting from all HMRC compliance work in 2008-09 was £12 billion. Data for 2009-10 are not yet available. HMRC do not have a breakdown of how much they hope to recover from compliance activity in 2011-12 or 2012-13. The Government's investment of £900 million should raise additional benefits of around £7 billion by 2014-15.

Revenue and Customs: Rural Areas

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what provision HM Revenue and Customs make for those in rural areas who are required to enter their tax returns online and who do not have broadband access. [28321]

Mr Gauke: Taxpayers who do not wish to file, or who have difficulty in filing, their income tax self-assessment return online have the option to file a paper return by 31 October following the end of the tax year concerned.

Social Security: Equality

Julie Hilling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what gender impact assessment his Department has undertaken to determine the relative effects of the implementation of his proposals regarding child benefit and entitlement to national insurance credits on *(a)* men and *(b)* women. [20348]

Mr Gauke *[holding answer 1 November 2010]*: The withdrawal of child benefit from families containing a higher rate taxpayer will not affect national insurance credits for state pension entitlement.

Students: Loans

Dr Pugh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy to enter the debts attributable to the Student Loan Company on the public sector balance sheet. [27550]

Mr Gauke: The total balance outstanding for the UK student loan book (including loans not yet due for repayment) at the end of the financial year 2009-10 was £35.95 billion. This figure is recorded in the national accounts as part of public sector net debt. The OBR in its 'Economic and fiscal outlook—November 2010', Box 4.3 page 123, gives an overview of how student loans are scored in the accounts and an estimate of how recent policy changes will affect the forecast.

Tax Allowances: Uprating

Chris Leslie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he plans to announce the next annual uprating of allowances and thresholds for tax and national insurance for 2011-12. [28764]

Mr Gauke: On 2 December the Government confirmed 2011-12 rates and thresholds for income tax, national insurance contributions (NICs), and tax credits. The limit for individual savings accounts (ISA) for 2011-12 was also confirmed.

A note containing this information was deposited in the Libraries of both Houses and is available on the HM Treasury website at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/tax_autumn_updates.htm

Tax Yields

Mr Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the real-terms growth of *(a)* actual and *(b)* underlying tax revenues in each year from 1985-86 to 2009-10; and if he will make a statement. [25665]

Mr Gauke: The Office for National Statistics publishes tax receipts from 1946-47 to 2009-10 in "Public Sector Finances: Supplementary Data", which is available at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=805

Real-terms growth of these tax receipts can be calculated by using GDP deflators that are published on HM Treasury website and available at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/gdp_deflators.xls

More information on cyclical adjustment methodology is set out in "Public finances and the cycle: Treasury Economic Working Paper No. 5", November 2008, available at:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100407010852/
http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/
prebud_pbr08_publicfinances.htm

This information helps to inform any assessment of 'underlying' tax receipts.

Welfare Tax Credits

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of tax credit recipients who experience marginal deduction rates of *(a)* 70% or less, *(b)* between 71 and 73%, *(c)* between 73 and 76% and *(d)* over 76%. [26046]

Mr Gauke: Table A3 of the June Budget shows the Government's estimate of the number of working heads of families facing high marginal deduction rates in 2011-12 who are in receipt of income-related benefits or tax credits where at least one person works 16 hours or more a week, and the head of the family is not receiving pensioner or disability premia. For those in receipt of tax credits, around 400,000 are estimated to face a deduction rate of 70% or less; 1,345,000 a deduction rate of between 71 and 73%; 5,000 a rate of between 73 and 76%; and 145,000 a rate of over 76%.

High marginal deduction rates are a long-standing problem that this Government are taking action to address through the new universal credit. This will replace the current complex system of means-tested working-age benefits with a simple streamlined payment. The universal credit will improve financial work incentives by ensuring that support is reduced at a consistent and managed rate as people return to work and increase their working hours and earnings.

Working Tax Credit: Wales

Jessica Morden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of women in Wales who will be affected by the proposed reduction in the childcare element of the working tax credit from 80 per cent. to 70 per cent. [29052]

Mr Gauke: The information requested is not available.

Jessica Morden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of single *(a)* women and *(b)* men without children in Wales who will qualify for working tax credits in each of the next three years. [29054]

Mr Gauke: The information requested is not available.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Attorney-General how much the Law Officers' Departments spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28160]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General and Solicitor-General superintend the Crown Prosecution Service, Serious Fraud Office, National Fraud Authority, Treasury Solicitor's Department and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate. The only Law Officers' Departments which use press cuttings services are the Attorney-General's Office (formerly Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers), the CPS and the SFO and this answer is provided on their behalf.

Attorney-General's Office

AGO press cuttings[1]

Financial year	*Total (£ excl VAT)*
2000-01[2]	11,520
2001-02	12,707
2002-03	13,624
2003-04	16,543
2004-05	23,527
2005-06	35,589
2006-07	37,656
2007-08	37,048
2008-09	23,964
2009-10	30,057
2010-11 to date	12,352

[1] There is no separate account coding for 'Press Cuttings' but based on recorded expenditure with press cutting suppliers since 2000-01, the expenditure on press cutting services for the Attorney-General's Office, excluding VAT, is above

[2] Figures prior to April 2000 are not held on the Department's current accounting system and cannot be accessed without incurring disproportionate costs.

Crown Prosecution Service

Financial year	*Total (£ inclusive of VAT)*
CPS press cuttings	
1997-98	21,040.67
1998-99	24,096.13
1999-2000	24,045.55
2000-01	24,635.53
2001-02	19,107.95
2002-03	23,926.08
2003-04	28,741.23
2004-05	24,135.14
2005-06	30,724.78
2006-07	30,192.39
2007-08	27,636.98
2008-09	19,879.94
2009-10[1]	24,460.61
2010-11 to date[2]	18,845.38
RCPO press cuttings	
2008-09	20,300.00
2009-10	18,051.46
2010-11 to date	857.28

[1] The CPS merged with RCPO on 1 January 2010, and the total amount is a reflection of both the CPS's and RCPO's spending.

[2] Includes online and broadcast media monitoring costs as well as press cuttings services.

Serious Fraud Office

SFO press cuttings

Financial year	*Total (£ excl VAT)*
1997-98	10,511
1998-99	13,380
1999-2000	10,630
2000-01	8,826
2001-02	8,535
2002-03	14,769
2003-04	16,913
2004-05	15,838
2005-06	14,341
2006-07	28,261
2007-08	13,908
2008-09	16,574
2009-10	15,342
2010-11 to date	7,131

JUSTICE

Courts: Repossession Orders

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many landlord possessions claims were dismissed by courts because the claimant had not followed civil procedure rules in the first two quarters of 2010. [28203]

Mr Djanogly: The Ministry of Justice does not hold figures centrally on the number of landlord possession claims dismissed by courts because the claimant had not followed civil procedure rules in the first two quarters of 2010.

While the administrative computer systems used in the county courts contain the incidence of orders made, those specifically relating to the dismissal of claims because the claimant had not followed civil procedure rules cannot be distinguished from other types of orders made. This information could be obtained only through the examination of individual case files at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts, in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28108]

Mr Djanogly: The Cabinet Office recently announced a package of measures designed to help government meet their aspiration that 25% of government contracts go to small and medium-sized enterprises. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is working closely with the Cabinet Office to ensure that these measures are embedded in its procurement practices.

The MoJ also acts proactively to engage and attract the interest of the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE). Opportunities are currently advertised through Supply to Government and will shortly to migrate to the new Contracts Finder portal where all government opportunities over £10,000 will be published. Opportunities are also advertised through Clinks, a charity that assists in communication to the sector.

Procurement activity is tailored to the value and complexity of the requirement but tends to be shorter and involve engagement opportunities with the sector via dialogue sessions to discus the requirement. MoJ has recently implemented an e-procurement tool that is easy for small businesses and the VCSE to use. The MoJ procurement processes comply with the Cabinet Office VCSE Compact compliant.

Departmental Data Protection

Mr Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice on how many occasions in the last three years the Secretary of State has used his power under section 59(2) of the Data Protection Act 1998 to release minutes relating to the business of his Department; and if he will make a statement. [28873]

Mr Djanogly: Section 59(2) of the Data Protection Act 1998 protects information supplied to the Information Commissioner by public authorities and data controllers as part of his investigations into their compliance with the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts. The commissioner and his staff may not disclose this information except with lawful authority. To do otherwise is an offence. The commissioner has lawful authority to disclose information, among other circumstances, when a public authority or data controller gives consent to disclose.

The decision whether the Department would consent to the release of information provided to the commissioner during the course of his investigations would be based on the merits of each request to do so and on the particular circumstances of the case.

The Department does not keep central records of the instances which it has been approached for consent to disclose information by virtue of section 59(2). This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost by examining individual case records.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how much his Department and its predecessors spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28154]

Mr Kenneth Clarke: The annual expenditure by MoJ—not including the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG)—on press cuttings from 2005-06 onwards was:

	£
2005-06	62,278
2006-07	23,009
2007-08	56,663
2008-09	94,075
2009-10	[1]144,724

[1] The primary cause of the higher spend in 2009-10 was the increase in high profile issues concerning the department in that Year. Additionally in 2009-10 regional coverage and a digital service were added.

The data for 2005-06 and 2006-07 refer to press cutting services provided for the Department of Constitutional Affairs (MoJ's immediate predecessor for the elements not contained within the Home Office). The data for 2007-08 to 2009-10 refer to a joint service provided to MoJ headquarters, the National Offender Management Service, The Tribunals Service and HM Courts Service.

The total spend by the MoJ and its predecessors is held for locally only from 2005-06. Retrieving archived information for before 2005 would exceed the disproportionate cost and time limits.

OPG was formed in 2007 and maintains a separate press cutting service. Its annual expenditure on these services was:

	£
2007-08	7,477
2008-09	4,181
2009-10	3,595

Additionally, the Tribunals Service has also maintained a separate press cutting service for web based news since May 2008. Its annual expenditure these services from May 2008 was:

	£
May 2008 - July 2009	4,136
August 2009 - July 2010	2,300
August 2010 - July 2011	2,421

Before 2006 the tribunals were not part of one single agency. It would incur disproportionate costs to identify tribunals-specific expenditure in the various departments that operated tribunals between 1997-98 and 2005-06.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what estimate he has made of the expenditure of his Department and its predecessor on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28376]

Mr Djanogly: The Ministry of Justice and its executive agencies produce a wide range of internal and external publications each year, including:

Command Papers
Papers presented to Parliament by Act
Consultation documents

As well as:

Annual accounts
Annual reports
Public information material
Statistical information
Internal documents, guides and handbooks

Copies of all the external publications the MoJ publishes can be found at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications.htm.

It is not possible to identify expenditure on specific types of publications without incurring disproportionate cost as this would involve examination of a very large number of transactions across a range of accounting categories.

Offenders

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of people convicted of criminal offences in the latest period for which figures are available had no previous cautions. [28465]

Mr Blunt: 35% of offenders convicted for indictable offences in England and Wales in 2009 had no previous cautions, reprimands or warnings. These figures have been derived from the dataset used to produce table 6.2 of 'Sentencing Statistics: England and Wales 2009', which was published on 21 October 2010.

The figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system, the police national computer, which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police.

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of people who received cautions were subsequently convicted of a criminal offence in the latest period in which figures are available. [28466]

Mr Blunt: In 2008, 17% of juveniles who received a reprimand or warning and 16% of adults who received a caution were subsequently convicted of a criminal offence within one year.

Further information on reoffending following a caution can be found in the 'Compendium of reoffending statistics and analysis' which was published on 4 November 2010, available at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/compendium-reoffending.htm

The figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system, the police national computer, which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police.

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the minimum period is after which a caution is considered spent. [28468]

Mr Blunt: Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a simple caution is considered to be spent immediately, for both adult and juvenile offenders. A conditional caution is considered to be spent three months from when the caution is administered, again for both adult and juvenile offenders.

We are conducting an assessment of sentencing and rehabilitation policies, and this will include the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. We will publish a Green Paper shortly with our proposals for consultation.

Offenders: Drugs

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what guidance he has issued on the release on licence, of offenders with unresolved drink or drug dependency issues. [28064]

Mr Blunt: Guidance on the release on licence of offenders with unresolved drug dependency issues is contained in Probation Circular (PC36/2007) "Managing Drug Misusers under Probation Supervision: Guidance for Probation, Criminal Justice Integrated Teams and Counselling Assessment Referral Advice and Throughcare Teams". Additionally, "Drug Misusing Offenders: Ensuring the continuity-of-care between prison and community" provides specific guidance on managing the continuity-of-care journey that drug misusing offenders follow on entering prison from the community, whilst in prison, and exiting prison. "National Offender Management Service Alcohol Interventions Guidance", issued in December 2009, includes equivalent guidance for offenders with alcohol problems.

Offenders: Release

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice under what circumstances offenders serving a custodial sentence following conviction for a violent offence may be released from custody on licence. [28065]

Mr Blunt: Legislation requires that adult offenders serving an immediate determinate custodial sentence must be released from custody at the halfway point of the sentence. Those serving determinate sentences of 12 months or more serve the second half of the sentence on licence in the community under supervision, and subject to recall to custody. Eligible offenders serving a determinate sentence of less than four years may be released under the home detention curfew scheme up to four and a half months earlier than the half-way release point if they pass a risk assessment. Offenders serving an indeterminate sentence, either a life sentence or a sentence of imprisonment for public protection (IPP), must serve in custody the full minimum term imposed by the court. After that point it is for the Parole Board to determine if and when they are safe to be released on licence.

Offenders: Sentencing

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will consider the merits of setting a minimum custodial sentence for offenders convicted of a second or third violent offence. [28066]

Mr Blunt: We are conducting a full assessment of sentencing and rehabilitation policy to ensure it is effective in deterring crime, protecting the public, punishing offenders and cutting re-offending. We will consult on any proposals shortly.

Office of the Public Guardian: Complaints

Stephen Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many complaints the Office of the Public Guardian received in the last 12 months; and how many such complaints were responded to within its target timescale. [28097]

Mr Djanogly: In the period of November 2009 to October 2010 the Office of the Public Guardian responded to 3,521 complaints. 2,650 (75%) of these responses were provided within the published 10-day target.

Preston Prison: Health Services

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of HM Prison Preston's certified normal accommodation consists of healthcare beds. [28931]

Mr Blunt: Current records indicate that 30 places in HMP Preston's baseline certified normal accommodation of 453 are in in-patient health care units.

Prisoners: Custodial Treatment

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what steps he is taking to ensure that prisoners with a drink or drug dependency are appropriately treated while in custody. [28067]

Mr Blunt: Drug treatment is in place to help prisoners with addiction, comprising clinical services, psychosocial interventions, case management and through care services. Alcohol treatment and rehabilitation services for those with an alcohol dependency are in the main also provided within the wider drug treatment framework. The key interventions available in prison for those dependent on alcohol are clinical detoxification and Alcoholics Anonymous/peer support.

The Government believe more needs to be done to offer offenders the opportunity to get off drugs and alcohol for good and into a position where they can stop offending and make a proper contribution to society. To achieve this we will run pilots to pay contractors by results to rehabilitate offenders with drug problems, launch prison drugs recovery wing pathfinders in a number of prisons. These plans will be outlined in more detail in a Green Paper on the rehabilitation and sentencing of offenders, which will be published shortly.

Prisoners: Drugs

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of people diagnosed with a drink or drug dependency on entering prison had successfully completed treatment for such dependencies on release in the latest period for which figures are available. [28068]

Mr Blunt: The Ministry of Justice does not record data in the form requested. However the number of prison-based accredited drug and alcohol treatment programme commencements and completions for 2009-10 is shown in the following table.

Additionally prison and health records show that in 2009-10 health services delivered 60,067 clinical interventions for drug and alcohol addiction in prisons.

Starts and completions table 2009-10—Prison-based accredited drug and alcohol treatment programmes[1]

Programme	*Starts*	*Completions*
12-Step (Drugs)	666	387
12-Step (Alcohol)	180	143
Alcohol Related Violence	40	16
Focus	95	84
Prisoner Addressing Substance Related Offending	3,378	2,727
Short Duration Programme	5,202	3,799
Substance Treatment Offending Programme	384	312
Therapeutic Community (Men)	247	155
Therapeutic Community (Women)	14	6
Total	10,206	7,629

[1] These data have been drawn from administrative data systems which may be amended at any time. Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system.

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to answer of 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 458W, on reoffenders, whether his Department plans to collect data on the reoffending of offenders treated for drug addiction in prison. [28765]

Mr Blunt: We are exploring what data will be required as part of the plans by Government to develop pilots to pay providers by results, including for the rehabilitation of offenders with drug problems.

The details of this are currently being considered by a cross-Government working group led by the Department of Health.

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 287W, on heroin addiction, how many adults were remanded or sentenced in 2009-10. [28766]

Mr Blunt: 1,315,820 adult offenders (aged 18 and over at the point of sentence) were sentenced in England and Wales during the calendar year 2009[1]. In 2009 an estimated 71,500 defendants were remanded in custody at magistrates court or the Crown court.

It is not known how many offenders were heroin addicts at the point of sentencing.

Sentencing data for 2010 are planned for publication as a calendar year report in spring 2011.

[1] http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/sentencingannual.htm

Prisons

Mr Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether he plans to market-test publicly-owned prisons. [27932]

Mr Blunt: The Government are currently developing their programme for competition in offender services. As indicated in the Ministry of Justice business plan, we will publish this programme in June 2011.

Probation: Finance

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how much funding his Department allocated to the *(a)* Probation Service, *(b)* Prison Service and *(c)* Courts Service in the west midlands in 2009-10; and what estimate he has made of the level of equivalent funding in (i) 2010-11, (ii) 2011-12, (iii) 2012-13 and (iv) 2013-14. [27934]

Mr Blunt: Funding for the Probation Boards and trusts in the west midlands in 2009-10 was £97.1 million and is estimated at £94.5 million for 2010-11. Current estimates for 2011-12 anticipate real terms reductions of approximately 4.5%. Estimates have not yet been made for subsequent years but will be impacted by the funding allocated to NOMS from within the MoJ's SR10 financial settlement with HM Treasury. That funding level has yet to be agreed by the executive management board.

Funding for prisons in the west midlands in 2009-10 was £193.7 million and is estimated at £ 197.4 million in 2010-11. Current estimates for 2011-12 anticipate real terms reductions of approximately 3%. Estimates have not yet been made for subsequent years but will be impacted by the funding allocated to NOMS from within the MoJ's SR10 financial settlement with HM Treasury. That funding level has yet to be agreed by the executive management board.

Funding of the Courts Service in the west midlands in 2009-10 was £45.818 million and is estimated at £45.626 million for 2010-11. Estimates have not yet been made for subsequent years but will be impacted by the funding allocated to HMCS from within the MoJ's SR10 financial settlement with HM Treasury. That funding level has yet to be agreed by the executive management board.

Sexual Offences: Community Orders

Mr Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the average time taken was between the making of a community order with a condition of a *(a)* sex offender programme and *(b)* group general offender behaviour programme and the commencement of that programme in each probation trust in the latest period for which figures are available. [27933]

Mr Blunt: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 709W.

Squatting: Crime

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 18 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 543W, on squatting: crime, which commitments in the coalition agreement could prevent the strengthening of the law in relation to squatting in residential properties. [28170]

Mr Blunt: In reviewing the law in relation to squatting in residential premises, the Government will be mindful of two specific commitments in the coalition agreement. They are the need to guard against the proliferation of unnecessary criminal offences and to protect the right to peaceful protest.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 7 December 2010

SCOTLAND

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28848]

David Mundell: The Scotland Office does not separately record the cost of travel undertaken in an employee's own vehicle from any other travel and subsistence costs claimed by its staff.

Higher Education: Scotland

Gregg McClymont: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he has had recent discussions with the Scottish Executive on the likely effects on universities in Scotland of the proposed changes to higher education funding in England; and if he will make a statement. [28781]

Michael Moore: Policy and funding responsibility for higher education in Scotland is devolved to the Scottish Government, and I am aware that Ministers in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills have had discussions with Scottish Ministers on a variety of subjects. Although I have not had recent discussions with the Scottish Government on this specific issue, I am in regular contact with a range of stakeholders on matters concerning higher education in Scotland.

WALES

Identity and Passport Service: Newport (Gwent)

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions she has had with the First Minister of Wales on the proposed closure of the Newport Passport Office. [29161]

Mrs Gillan: I meet regularly with the First Minister to discuss a number of topics, including the future of Newport Passport Office and will continue to discuss these matters.

Public Expenditure

Nick Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether the Government have determined what proportion of the £350 million funding for broadband announced in the comprehensive spending review will be spent in Wales. [28963]

Mr David Jones: The Government's Broadband Strategy announced yesterday that every community in the UK, including Wales, will have access to superfast broadband as we move towards our aim to have Europe's best broadband network. We have not allocated shares from the £530 million we have made available to help deliver on this commitment by 2015, but expect that projects in Wales will receive an appropriate share of this funding.

The Secretary of State for Wales, my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesham and Amersham (Mrs Gillan) hosted a meeting today with the Broadband Minister and the Deputy First Minister of the Welsh Assembly Government to discuss the co-ordination of work that is being undertaken by both Governments to ensure that the needs of the people of Wales are at the heart of this new drive.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Carbon Emissions: Housing

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the skills available in the construction workforce to meet his Department's target in respect of zero-carbon new homes by 2016. [27970]

Andrew Stunell: I have been asked to reply.

Two reports published in November show the home building industry is aware of the huge changes it faces over the forthcoming decade, including zero carbon homes:

A report published on 2 November by the Zero Carbon Hub, the National House Building Council and ConstructionSkills on "Home Building Skills 2020" investigated likely changes affecting the new homes industry, including zero carbon homes and how professional, trade and technical roles should prepare in terms of training and qualifications. The report concluded that most of today's core skills for home building will be very similar in future. What will be different is the context in which those skills are applied and the importance of understanding how the work of each part of the industry impacts on others to ensure the integrity of the 'system' as a whole; and

A report by the Government's Innovation and Growth Team, chaired by Paul Morrell, the Government's Chief Construction Adviser, published on 29 November emphasised the importance of sharing learning to date and in future which will help industry develop its response to the challenge of the low carbon agenda.

I welcome both reports and the collaboration of partners with a wide range of knowledge and experience. This work will be helpful in enabling the delivery of zero carbon homes.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how much his Department has spent on press cuttings services in each year since its creation. [28152]

Gregory Barker: DECC was created in October 2008.

In 2008-09 DECC spent £41,217.67 on press cuttings

In 2009-10 DECC spent £114,587.29 on press cuttings

From April to November 2010 DECC has spent £56,740.12 on press cuttings

As a result of cost cutting measures, DECC has now substantially reduced the scope of, and therefore made substantial savings on, its press cuttings service.

Departmental Written Questions

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many and what proportion of questions tabled to the Secretary of State for ordinary written answer *(a)* in Session 2009-10 and *(b)* since May 2010 were answered within (i) seven days and (ii) 14 days of tabling; how many such questions tabled between May 2010 and

12 November 2010 remained unanswered by 18 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to his Department of answering a question for ordinary written answer within seven days of tabling in the latest period for which figures are available. [25954]

Gregory Barker: The Government have committed to providing the Procedure Committee with sessional statistics in a standard format on the time taken to respond to written parliamentary questions for the 2009-10 session. This information will be submitted to the Procedure Committee shortly.

The Department does not hold this information in the format requested. In the period 25 May to 12 November 2010, the Department received 683 ordinary written questions of which 518 (76%) were answered within five sitting days. All 683 questions have now received a substantive answer.

In the same period the Department received 78 named day questions of which 51 (65%) were answered on or before the day for answer. All 78 questions have now received a substantive answer.

The Department does not hold centrally estimates of the cost relating to the answering of parliamentary questions. For information on the annual indexation exercise of the costs conducted by HM Treasury, I refer my hon. Friend to the written ministerial statement made by the then Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (Sarah McCarthy-Fry) on 20 January 2010, *Official Report*, column 15WS.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent estimate he has made of the number of questions to his Department tabled in the *(a)* House of Commons and *(b)* House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available. [28489]

Gregory Barker: In the case of questions that are deemed to be 'round robin', the Guide to Parliamentary Work, published by the Leader of the House of Commons

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/government-business/parliamentary-business.aspx

states that Departments should not delay preparing an answer until 'round robin' advice is provided, and should not miss the target deadlines for this reason.

Energy Market

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent consideration he has given to the merits of referring the matter of the operation of the energy retail market to the Competition Commission. [28472]

Charles Hendry: Reference of the market to the Competition Commission is in the first place a matter for the independent sector regulator, Ofgem. The Secretary of State may only make a reference if Ofgem has decided not to do so or, after bringing to the attention of Ofgem information he considers relevant to the making of a reference, where he is not satisfied that Ofgem will make such a reference in a reasonable period. The Secretary of State must have reasonable grounds for suspecting that competition is not working effectively before making a referral.

Following the recent announcement of price increases by some energy suppliers, Ofgem has launched a review of the effectiveness of the retail energy market to see if further action is needed to protect customers. Ofgem plans to complete the review by March 2011 alongside its next quarterly report on retail and wholesale energy prices.

Energy Supply

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the likely number of networks affected by proposals to ensure third-party access to licence-exempt electricity and gas networks; and what assessment he has made of Ofgem's capacity to process each tariff agreement generated under these proposals. [26987]

Charles Hendry: Most if not all of the networks likely to be affected by these proposals operate under exemptions from the requirement for an electricity or gas licence. These exemptions are deregulatory in that, in most cases, networks are not obliged to apply for an exemption. It is therefore difficult to estimate the number of networks affected, but there are likely to be significant numbers. As part of the recent consultation the Government published an impact assessment which estimated that of 93TWh of non-domestic, non-industrial electricity consumption (DUKES 2010) half is supplied through private networks.

The impact assessment can be found at the following link:

http://www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/Consultations/698-third-party-access-exempt-networks-ia.pdf

Ofgem will only need to approve tariff agreements in cases where third-party access has been requested and the licence-exempt network owner decides to make a charge for use of that network. Ofgem will also publish a generic charging methodology that companies can opt for and that this should aid Ofgem's ability to process tariffs agreements.

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate his Department has made of the likely financial effect of the European Court of Justice's Citiworks ruling on *(a)* ports, *(b)* rail stations, *(c)* London underground stations, *(d)* industrial estates, *(e)* marinas, *(f)* airports and *(g)* caravan parks of the provision and enforcement of third-party access to licence-exempt electricity and gas networks. [27008]

Charles Hendry: Where meters are required or upgrading is necessary to facilitate third-party access, the costs associated with such work will ultimately be met by the customer or, on occasion, the prospective third-party supplier. The energy regulator, Ofgem, has confirmed that private network owners, including commercial landlords, will not be obliged to upgrade their networks or become licensed distributors in order to allow third-party access.

Energy Supply: Impact Assessments

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate of the *(a)* cost of and *(b)* liabilities in respect of network upgrades for commercial landlords his Department made in preparing the regulatory impact assessment on the implications of the European Court of Justice's Citiworks ruling on the provision of third-party access to licence exempt electricity and gas networks. [27556]

Charles Hendry: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him today to question 27008.

Energy: Prices

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what assessment he has made of the effects of rising energy prices on small and medium-sized enterprises; and if he will make a statement. [27971]

Charles Hendry: Ofgem actively monitors the energy market and the activities of licence holders and has frequent interactions with all sizes of non-domestic enterprises.

These contacts have highlighted particular concerns around the prices being charged for deemed rates. Suppliers must ensure that deemed rates are not "unduly onerous" and Ofgem is currently investigating whether prices are higher than they should be.

Green Climate Fund

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change pursuant to the Prime Minister's oral answer of 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 820, which fast-developing countries he has identified as ones which ought to begin to make financial contributions to the Global Climate Fund; and if he will make a statement. [29373]

Charles Hendry: The Green Climate Fund is currently under discussion as part of UNFCCC negotiations in Cancun—the fund has not yet been agreed or designed. Therefore, it would be premature to speculate about which individual countries would make financial contributions. Our hope is that the fund will be agreed in Cancun and that, once operational, will provide a suitable vehicle for distributing future climate finance effectively.

Renewable Energy

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what consideration he has given to the merits of including energy from deep geothermal heat in *(a)* the renewable heat incentive and *(b)* the feed-in tariff. [28469]

Charles Hendry: The policy details of the renewable heat incentive are currently being finalised and will be published as soon as possible. As part of the policy-making process my officials have held a number of meetings with representatives of the renewables industry as well as the deep geothermal industry specifically.

Deep geothermal electricity is eligible for two ROCs under the renewables obligation, as are other innovative renewable power technologies. The feed-in tariffs do not currently cover this technology. As more innovative technologies, such as deep geothermal, become deployable at scale, the FITs scheme has the potential to develop the market for these technologies and we will consider new technologies and their eligibility for FITs at scheme reviews.

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what discussions he has had on the availability of feed-in tariffs to community groups which are interested in setting up renewable energy projects. [28608]

Charles Hendry: Feed-in tariffs are available to any community group developing local electricity generation schemes under 5 MW. The Department is in discussions with a range of community groups and networks to ensure that awareness of the financial incentive is wide-ranging. To this end we launched community energy online last week and have also announced a series of localised events to promote not just the feed-in tariff but the wider community energy programme to local authorities and community groups across England.

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps his Department is taking to encourage community groups to set up renewable energy projects. [28609]

Charles Hendry: The coalition agreement commits to supporting and encouraging community ownership of renewable energy schemes. In the six months since then, we have secured the feed-in tariff which is available to any community and are working through the final details of the world's first renewable heat incentive.

Alongside these financial incentives, we have launched community energy online, a portal providing guidance and support for communities and local authorities. This tool is being developed in partnership with community networks, the Local Government Group and with Co-operatives UK. It will provide case studies and best practice, "how-to" guides and advice on feasibility, community engagement and financing among other key issues.

We have also announced a series of events around the country which will seek to engage and enthuse communities. These are being developed in partnership with community networks.

Together with the Environment Agency, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Energy Saving Trust, my Department has launched an online booklet "Hydropower: a guide for you and your community" to offer communities and individuals a clear route map on how to develop hydropower schemes.

All this work has been developed on the back of research such as The Big Energy Shift, Green Streets, Low Carbon Building Programme and Low Carbon Community Challenge. These small-scale programmes have highlighted barriers which the Government are now working to overcome.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Billy Wright Inquiry: Finance

Dr Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on IT equipment for the Billy Wright inquiry; and how such equipment was disposed of at the end of the inquiry. [28957]

Mr Paterson: I am advised that the Billy Wright inquiry spent £303,326 on IT equipment between 2005 and 2010. This figure reflects departmental capital accounting policy which is to capitalise all IT equipment if the useful life of the equipment is greater than one year and the cost, including VAT, is greater than £1,000. Figures relating to expenditure by the Billy Wright inquiry are available on the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) website:

www.nio.gov.uk

Upon the closure of the inquiry, IT equipment which retained its functionality and value was transferred to other areas of the Department for use elsewhere. Other equipment which had reached the end of its useful economic life was disposed of securely.

Commission for Victims and Survivors

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has received from the Commission for Victims and Survivors on measures to deal with the past in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [29196]

Mr Paterson: I have received one substantive written representation from the Commission for Victims and Survivors on measures to deal with the past (which the Commissioners made public themselves) and have also met with the Commissioners. I intend to meet with them again as the Minister of State and I continue to engage with a broad range of groups and individuals on the subject of handling the past.

Consultative Group on the Past

Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to hold meetings with the political parties in Northern Ireland on the recommendations made in the report of the Consultative Group on the Past. [29184]

Mr Paterson: As part of the listening exercise on the past which the Minister of State and I are conducting, I have already met most of the political parties to discuss their views on legacy issues in Northern Ireland. These meetings have included discussions on the recommendations made to the previous Government by the Consultative Group on the Past.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28362]

Mr Paterson: The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) has not held any conferences since 1 April 2010. No budgets have been allocated for conferences in the Department.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working within his private office in each of the last five years. [28559]

Mr Paterson: Comparable figures for the Department as it is now configured are not available following the completion of devolution of policing and justice powers on 12 April 2010.

From 12 April 2010 until 31 October 2010, £8,505 was paid in overtime to staff in the joint Private Office for the Secretary of State and the Minister of State.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on printing *(a)* command papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28375]

Mr Paterson: Comparable figures for the Department as it is now configured are not available following the completion of devolution on 12 April 2010.

Since 12 April, the Department has spent £5,410 on printing papers presented to Parliament by Act. The Department has incurred no expenditure printing command papers, consultation documents, or other papers. These figures do not include expenditure by arm's-length bodies.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28849]

Mr Paterson: Comparable figures for the Department as it is now configured are not available following the completion of devolution of policing and justice powers on 12 April 2010.

TRANSPORT

Departmental Billing

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidelines his Department follows on the prompt payment of suppliers. [29209]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport follows the guidelines on prompt payment of suppliers issued by the UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Where clarification on prompt payment guidelines is required we deal directly with BIS.

Departmental Conditions of Employment

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his *(a)* original and *(b)* current estimate is of the cost of the (i) establishment and (ii) operation of the flexible benefit project over a three-year period. [23877]

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* initial cost estimate was and *(b)* cost estimate is of (i) establishing and (ii) operating the flexible benefits project over a three-year period; and if he will make a statement. [26034]

Norman Baker: The original net estimate for the cost of a three-year project for the establishment and operation of the Department's 'Your Reward' programme, one element of which is flexible benefits, was £874,000 in February 2009. This is also the current estimate of the total cost of the project. The equivalent per capita cost is just over £16 per annum based on 18,186 employees (FTEs) in the central Department and its seven Executive agencies.

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many officials of his Department have used the flexible benefits project to carry out cost comparison of products and services; and what assessment he has made of the value for money of the service. [26033]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport's 'Your Reward' portal enables staff to view and purchase a range of products offered with retailer discounts. Since the scheme came into operation in November 2009, 88,151 viewings have been recorded to date. There is no information about whether the purpose was to carry out cost comparisons or to view and purchase products.

The estimated net cost of a three-year project for the establishment and operation of the Department's 'Your Reward' programme is £874,000. The equivalent per capita cost is just over £16 per annum based on 18,186 employees (FTEs).

'Your Reward' responds to key work force challenges and is aligned to civil service reward principles in terms of adopting a total reward approach. The range of benefits offered complements the Department's aim to reduce employee absence, improve employee well-being and support the green transport agenda.

Departmental Consultants

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the hospitality for which his Department paid Amey Business *(a)* £21,933.26 on 4 June 2010, *(b)* £15,463.85 on 22 June 2010 and (c) £13,804.61 on 16 June 2010. [27147]

Norman Baker: The data above relate to hospitality costs incurred at the main Department for Transport headquarters buildings in London in *(a)* March 2010, *(b)* April 2010 and *(c)* May 2010.

Since June 2010 the central Department rules for ordering hospitality are as follows:

> "Do not organise any refreshments for internal meetings. Hospitality is appropriate only where there are external attendees. Avoid arranging meetings of longer than one hour between 12pm and 2pm so that working lunches are not required.
>
> You should have written approval from the Head of Division before ordering anything more expensive than teas and coffees."

Departmental Official Cars

Miss Begg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what mileage was travelled by Ministers in cars provided by the Government Car Service in each month between May and October in *(a)* 2009 and *(b)* 2010. [27442]

Mike Penning: No information on mileage travelled by Ministers in cars provided by the Government Car and Despatch Agency is held for the periods in question.

Mrs Glindon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many journeys of under a mile in central London Ministers have taken in Government cars since May 2010. [27691]

Mike Penning: Information on journeys under a mile made by Ministers in Government cars since May 2010 is not available as the Government Car and Despatch Agency does not keep a record of such information.

Prior to September 2010 all Ministers were provided with an allocated car and driver on an as-directed basis. As a result there was no requirement to keep a record of journeys made. A number of Ministers have continued to be driven under this arrangement since September 2010.

Departmental Postal Services

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the monetary value was of contracts between his Department and its predecessors and *(a)* Post Office Ltd and *(b)* Royal Mail in (i) 1997-98 and (ii) each year since 2004-05. [24942]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002 and information is provided from that date or the date an agency was formed, if later.

The central Department, Driving Standards Agency, Highways Agency, Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Vehicle Certification Agency and Vehicle Operator Services Agency have not had a contract with *(a)* Post Office Ltd and *(b)* Royal Mail in each year since 2004-05.

Government Car and Despatch Agency has a framework arrangement with Royal Mail to provide same-day and next-day services but there has been no spend as Royal Mail services have not been used.

The value of contracts between the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and Post Office Ltd and Royal Mail since 2004-05 is set out in the following table. DVLA's financial system only goes back to 2002-03, therefore earlier figures are not available. The amounts are exclusive of VAT.

£

Financial year	*Total Post Office Ltd*	*Total Royal Mail*
2004-05	48,447,223.80	22,176,682.00
2005-06	41,496,161.57	17,909,286.25
2006-07	38,423,264.95	19,160,800.86
2007-08	34,759,836.74	19,730,317.74
2008-09	32,970,126.98	20,906,909.70
2009-10	31,520,332.70	26,021,196.49

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what services provided by his Department and its predecessors were the subject of a contract with Post Office Ltd in 1997-98 and have subsequently become the subject of a contract with another supplier; and what the monetary value was of each such contract in *(a)* 1997-98 and *(b)* the latest period for which figures are available in each case. [24943]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002. I regret that information on what services were the subject of a contract with Post Office Ltd in 1997-98 is not available.

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which services of his Department and its predecessors have been the subject of a contract awarded in a tender process in which Post Office Ltd submitted a bid since 1997-98. [24944]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002 and information is provided from that date or the date an agency was formed, if later.

The Post Office Ltd has not bid for any contract tendered by the central Department, the Driving Standards Agency, Government Car and Despatch Agency, Highways Agency, Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Vehicle Operator Services Agency and Vehicle Certification Agency.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency negotiated a contract with Post Office Ltd for vehicle relicensing and other services. Other services include driving licence application, displaying forms across the Post Office network, a returned or unpaid cheques service and network support for these services.

Departmental Regulation

Mr Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what regulations sponsored by his Department have been revoked in the last six months; [24377]

(2) what new regulations sponsored by his Department have been introduced through *(a)* primary legislation and *(b)* statutory instrument in the last six months. [24492]

Mike Penning: No central list of revoked regulations is available. In the last six months, my Department has not revoked any regulatory measures other than those revoked by measures that replaced them.

However, it is possible that regulations sponsored by the Department for Transport have been revoked by instruments for which other Departments have policy responsibility.

We are continuing to scrutinise our stock of regulation and pipeline measures inherited from the previous Administration with a view to finding OUTs, for the One-in, One-out regulatory management system.

In the last six months, no regulations have been made through primary legislation and 15 through statutory instruments. These are listed in the following table. 13 of the measures required no impact assessment because no impact on business or civil society organisations was expected, while the remaining two imposed no net cost on such bodies. The total does not include 762 Temporary Local Highways Orders and 45 Temporary Local Flying Orders.

Legislation laid in Parliament by the Department for Transport since 1 May 2010

The Newlyn Pier and Harbour Revision (Constitution) Order 2010	2010 No. 1462	S.I. (UK General)
The Rail Passengers' Rights and Obligations Regulations 2010	2010 No. 1504	S.I. (UK General)
The Council of the City of York (Hungate Bridge) Scheme 2009 Confirmation Instrument 2010	2010 No. 1508	S.I. (UK General)
The Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions Designation (No. 3) Order 2010	2010 No. 1514	S.I. (UK General)
The Dartford-Thurrock Crossing (Amendment) Regulations 2010	2010 No. 1531	S.I. (UK General)
The Network Rail (Nuneaton North Chord) Order 2010	2010 No. 1721	S.I. (UK General)
The Midland Metro Order 2010	2010 No. 1722	S.I. (UK General)
The Merchant Shipping (Ship-to-Ship Transfers) (Amendment) Regulations 2010	2010 No. 1769	S.I. (UK General)
The Sutton Harbour Revision Order 2010	2010 No. 1887	S.I. (UK General)
The Ryde Pier Harbour Revision Order 2010	2010 No. 1900	S.I. (UK General)
The Port of Bristol (Deep Sea Container Terminal) Harbour Revision Order 2010	2010 No. 2020	S.I. (UK General)
The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2010	2010 No. 2060	S.I. (UK General)
The Tonnage Tax (Training Requirement) (Amendment) Regulations 2010	2010 No. 2158	S.I. (UK General)
The Highway Litter Clearance and Cleaning (Transfer of Responsibility) (England) (Amendment) Order 2010	2010 No. 2401	S.I. (UK General)
The Gosport Borough Council (Ferry Works) Harbour Revision Order 2010	2010 No. 2414	S.I. (UK General)

Departmental Telephone Services

Angela Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (i) received and (ii) saved through the use of non-geographical telephone numbers in (A) 2008-09 and (B) 2009-10; and how much he expects to be received or saved in 2010-11 [28983]

Norman Baker: The central Department operates two non-geographic telephone numbers from which the Department receives no income or financial benefit.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) received the following revenue as a result of its use of 0870 and 0906 non-geographic numbers:

	£
2008-09	3,846,901
2009-10	1,925,550
2010-11	[1]747,589

[1] Projected

The above figures are a combined total of all DVLA 0870 and 0906 numbers and are based on financial years (April to March). No estimate has been made on how much has been saved by using non-geographical telephone numbers.

Ebbsfleet Railway Station

Mr Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his most recent estimate is of the average number of international passengers using Ebbsfleet station each month. [27106]

Mrs Villiers: Eurostar International Ltd advises that in 2009, Eurostar carried 9.2 million international passengers. The corresponding figure for the first half of 2010 was 4.6 million. The company does not release information for individual stations.

The Government do not undertake any separate count or estimate relating specifically to international passengers.

Members: Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 25 October 2010 in regard to Mrs S Fairclough. [29293]

Mr Philip Hammond: I replied to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton on the 3 December 2010.

Motorways: Noise

Gavin Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what recent steps the Highways Agency has taken to reduce noise from the M54 in Staffordshire; [28638]

(2) what recent steps the Highways Agency has taken to reduce noise from the M6 between junctions 10 and 13. [28639]

Mike Penning: It is the Department for Transport's policy to resurface motorways and trunk roads with material with noise reducing properties when the existing surface needs replacing as part of its normal maintenance cycle.

The surface of the M54 in Staffordshire has not yet reached the stage where a full resurfacing scheme is justified and there have been no recent works other than minor routine patching schemes. A major surfacing renewal scheme was carried out on the M6 between junctions 12 and 13 in 2007. This means that combined with previous schemes, the length of motorway between junctions 10 and 13 has a low noise surface and no further schemes are proposed in the foreseeable future. Environmental barriers are being replaced on the M6 between junctions 8 and 10A as part of the current managed motorway scheme, which will open the hard shoulder as a running lane. Although the barriers provide some relief from noise, they are not specifically intended for noise reduction.

Railways: Facilities

Jonathan Reynolds: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with the Association of Train Operating Companies on travel facilities provision for train drivers. [19146]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport has not held any recent discussions with the Association of Train Operating Companies on the subject of travel facilities for drivers.

Railways: Fares

Gavin Shuker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department conducted an equality impact assessment of his policy to allow rail fares to increase by 3% above the retail prices index. [24464]

Mrs Villiers: Appropriate consideration was given to the equalities impact of the comprehensive spending review decision on rail fares, in accordance with statutory obligations and taking on board the relevant policy criteria. In the light of this assessment, a full equalities impact assessment was not considered to be necessary.

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has held with *(a)* Passenger Focus and *(b)* Network Rail in respect of raising the present cap on rail fares; and if he will make a statement. [28092]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: Ministers meet Passenger Focus regularly to discuss matters of concern. No specific discussions have taken place between Ministers and Passenger Focus on the decision to raise the cap on rail fares for three years from 2012 onwards. However, research and other work by Passenger Focus was considered before the decision was taken on raising the cap. Ministers would not expect to discuss the cap with Network Rail.

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he had held with *(a)* the Chancellor of the Exchequer and *(b)* the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on the socio-economic effects on commuters in (i) the west midlands and (ii) England of proposed increases in rail fares; and if he will make a statement. [28093]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: The Secretary of State for Transport, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) discusses matters of policy in general terms with his Cabinet colleagues on a regular basis. A distributional analysis of the impact of rail fare increases was conducted during the spending review and this fed into Treasury analyses of overall spending review outcomes.

Despite the economic downturn, passenger numbers are, in general, still increasing and we expect this trend to continue. The fares increase announced recently means that the Government can deliver much-needed improvements on the rail network including improving conditions and relieving overcrowding on busy routes.

Railways: West Midlands

Karen Lumley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much and what proportion of the £90 million allocated to improving rail platforms in the 2010 spending review will be spent in *(a)* the west midlands and *(b)* Redditch. [20967]

Mrs Villiers: Improvements to rail platforms and due to take place in several regions. For example major works are always to modernise Birmingham New Street station, including its platforms.

Full details of spending on rail platform improvements planned across the network can be obtained from Network Rail, as the company responsible for delivering the high-level outputs specified by Government.

Rolling Stock: Procurement

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rail carriages were ordered in each of the last three years, and with which suppliers such orders were placed. [27999]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* 396 new rail carriages have been ordered in the last three years: 276 in 2008, 120 in 2009, and 0 in 2010, as shown in the table.

Rail carriages ordered

	Operator	*Manufacturer*	*Vehicles*
2008	Transport for London	Bombardier	28 (class 378)
	Transport for London	Bombardier	12 (class 172)
	West Coast	Alstom	106 (class 390)
	First Scotrail	Siemens	130 (class 380)
2009	National Express East Anglia	Bombardier	120 (class 379)
2010			
Total			396

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consideration his Department gave to the provisions in the European procurement directive in its tendering for the Intercity Expressway programme. [28089]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* The tendering exercise for the Intercity Express programme has been conducted in full accordance with both UK and European Union requirements for the procurement of services and products by public authorities.

Severn River Crossing: Tolls

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to reduce the level of tolls on the Severn crossing following the expected completion of debt repayment in 2017. [25602]

Mike Penning: No decisions have been made regarding the future charge levels at the crossings once the concession expires.

Timber

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the compliance of *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* its non-departmental public bodies with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber. [27850]

Norman Baker: All areas of the Department for Transport including its executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), comply with the UK Government's timber procurement policy.

Compliance is measured at the most appropriate point of the procurement process, dependent on the procurement route taken. Where procurement is through central Government or Buying Solutions contracts, the Department ensures compliance at the point of delivery. Where third parties procure on behalf of the Department, its agencies or NDPBs, the contract with the third party will include a clause(s) requiring that all timber and timber-derived products meet the Government's timber procurement policy.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture: Subsidies

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what work is being carried out by her Department to ensure the Rural Payments Agency can resume payments of fruit and vegetable aid in the short term. [28607]

Mr Paice: DEFRA and Rural Payments Agency (RPA) officials are working closely together to give fruit and vegetable producer organisations urgent consideration. Producer organisations are aware that the issues raised by EU auditors are serious for both the industry and UK taxpayers.

In addition, DEFRA recently formed a working group with the RPA and representatives of producer organisations to clarify guidance for the sector. This will help producer organisations continue to meet the EU regulatory requirements covering the Fruit and Vegetables Aid scheme.

Angling

Mr Marcus Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will meet the chairman of the Angling Trust to discuss levels of participation in angling. [28327]

Richard Benyon: I expressed my intention to hold an angling summit at a meeting I held with the Angling Trust in September 2010. The summit will cover a variety of issues related to angling, including levels of participation. The summit will take place early in the new year and I will ensure that the Angling Trust, along with other representative organisations, is invited to attend.

Angling: Licensing

Mr Marcus Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will bring forward proposals to enable the Environment Agency to send out reminders for the renewal of rod licences. [28325]

Richard Benyon: While the Environment Agency has a statutory duty to implement a system of rod and line licences in England and Wales, and reminders for the renewal of rod licences enable the agency to provide sufficient advice and guidance to their customers, as of May 2010 all Government expenditure on marketing and publicity is subject to the scrutiny of departmental approvals panels, following guidance from the Cabinet Office. DEFRA officials are currently working closely with the Environment Agency to ensure that value for money is taken into account when reminders for the renewal of rod licences are sent out to the angling community.

Mr Marcus Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many angling rod licences were sold in each of the last five years. [28328]

Richard Benyon: The Environment Agency sells licences for fishing with rod and line in England, Wales, and on the Border Esk in Scotland. The licence year runs from 1 April to 31 March. Published sales of rod licences (taken from Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Statistics reports) are as follows:

	Rod licence sales
2005-06	1,296,843
2006-07	1,281,537
2007-08	1,352,400
2008-09	1,344,472
2009-10	1,469,344

Animal Welfare: Circuses

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will assess the evidence against self-regulation in monitoring the condition of wild animals used in circuses. [27914]

Mr Paice: DEFRA officials are currently considering all the evidence available regarding the issue of wild animals in circuses.

DEFRA Ministers have been meeting with representatives of welfare groups and the circus industry. An industry body has proposed a self-regulatory system, but no decisions have been made.

Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department has made any assessment of the merits of the use of poison gas for the culling of badgers. [28419]

Mr Paice: Our consultation document makes clear that we have ruled out gassing for the time being on the basis that we do not currently have evidence that it is a sufficiently humane and effective method of culling.

Carbon Emissions: Business

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department plans to take to increase reporting of carbon emissions by UK-listed companies. [27972]

Mr Paice: The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Meriden (Mrs Spelman) will announce how we intend to proceed in promoting more widespread and consistent reporting of greenhouse gas emissions in early 2011.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the expenditure of her Department and its predecessors on printing *(a)* command papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28382]

Richard Benyon: Information in the Department's financial records, including its Executive agencies, for expenditure related to each of these items could be determined only at disproportionate cost as transaction records do not separately cover these specific types of expenditure.

EC Fisheries Council

Ms Ritchie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who will be members of the UK negotiating team at the December 2010 meeting of the EU Fisheries Council. [29150]

Richard Benyon: I will lead the UK Fisheries Delegation at the Council on 13 and 14 December, and will be accompanied by the Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment (Richard Lochhead) and the Minister for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland (Michelle Gildernew). The Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for South East Cambridgeshire (Mr Paice), will be attending for Monday 13 December only. All will be accompanied by officials.

EU Grants and Loans

Mr Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to announce the level of funding for the Rural Development programme for England scheme-funded local action groups after April 2011. [27929]

Mr Paice: DEFRA will be providing regional development agencies (RDAs) with further clarity on the indicative budgets available for the socio-economic elements of the Rural Development programme for England (RDPE) for the next financial year, once the implications of the spending review are confirmed. RDAs will review indicative budget allocations to local action groups to ensure that full spend of the RDPE budget allocation made available through the Leader approach is achieved.

Mr Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the extent of duplication of effort between independent trade support bodies and projects funded from the public purse through the Rural Development programme for England scheme. [27930]

Mr Paice: All applications for funding under the Rural Development programme for England (RDPE) are subject to an appraisal process that meets the requirements of the guidance for appraisal, delivery and evaluation produced jointly by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, English Partnerships (now part of the Homes and Communities Agency), regional development agencies and the Office of Project and Programme Advice and Training. That appraisal process includes, among other issues, an assessment of the need for Government funding and any local displacement of existing business. The mid-term evaluation of the RDPE currently being undertaken is considering the additional funding provided through the programme and any displacement impacts.

Farmers: Compensation

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what has been the average amount of compensation paid to farmers for the slaughter of each animal type for the purpose of tuberculosis control in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [28677]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: In the last five years payments have been made for TB control reasons to owners of cattle, deer and camelids.

The average DEFRA compensation payment for TB affected cattle in each of the last five years was:

	Average cattle compensation paid per animal (£)
2009	1,214
2008	1,056
2007	701
2006	1,042
2005	1,381

These figures were derived from dividing recorded expenditure by recorded number of cattle slaughtered; in some cases, reactors will be reported in one year but compensation paid in the next.

Statutory compensation paid to owners of deer slaughtered for TB control purposes is £600 or 50% of market value, whichever is less. The following table shows the total amount of compensation paid in each of the last five years.

	Deer compensation paid (£000)
2009	0
2008	0
2007	<1
2006	6
2005	2

No statutory compensation is payable for any other animals. However, since June 2007 DEFRA has operated a non-statutory ex gratia scheme paying farmers £750 for each positive TB test camelid slaughtered for disease control purposes. Before June 2007 ex gratia payments were made, based on individual valuations of the animals. However, we cannot disclose details of these payments as that would enable third parties to attribute the payments to a specific claimant. Information that would enable compensation to be attributed to specific claimants cannot be disclosed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Flood Control

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects Exercise Watermark to *(a)* commence and *(b)* conclude. [28497]

Richard Benyon: Exercise Watermark will commence on 4 March 2011 and will conclude on 11 March 2011.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made on the implementation of recommendation 39 of the Pitt review. [28498]

Richard Benyon: Good progress has been made on recommendation 39 of the Pitt Review.

A comprehensive multi-agency Flood Rescue Concept of Operations (FRCO) has been published which provides national standards for flood rescue assets, training and equipment, and clarity on command and co-ordination in a wide-scale flooding event.

A national, multi-agency register of flood rescue assets and the operational arrangements that will govern how they are used is being finalised, and will be co-ordinated by the Fire and Rescue Services' National Co-ordination Centre. To complement this, DEFRA has recently launched a grant scheme for flood rescue operators, including Fire and Rescue Authorities, to apply for funding to help improve national capability and meet the standards for flood rescue assets as defined in the FRCO. £650,000 has been allocated to date and a further round of the grant scheme has been opened which will conclude in January 2011.

DEFRA has also committed funding to raising the standard of existing teams to the required level, as articulated in the FRCO. This is important, as the consideration should be not only numbers of assets, but the standards of assets allowing them to be successfully utilised in flooding emergencies. DEFRA has committed such funding to Fire and Rescue Authorities as well as voluntary flood rescue organisations.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and *(b)* the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser on (i) the implementation of recommendation 39 of the Pitt review and (ii) Exercise Watermark. [28499]

Richard Benyon: The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Meriden (Mrs Spelman) speaks frequently with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, my right hon. Friend the Member for Brentwood and Ongar (Mr Pickles) on a range of issues. She recently wrote to him about his Department's participation in Exercise Watermark. DEFRA officials have frequent discussions with the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, and his team, on the Government's response to the Pitt review and Exercise Watermark.

Forestry Commission: Land

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions *(a)* she and *(b)* Ministers in her Department have had with commercial companies on the future of Forestry Commission land. [28987]

Mr Paice: I regularly meet representatives from companies operating in the forestry sector in my role as Minister of State. Discussions have covered a broad range of issues of interest to the sector, including the Government's proposals to consult on the future of the public forest estate in England.

Tristram Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she plans to take to ensure that land sold from the Forestry Commission portfolio will be managed to UK Forestry standards and guidelines. [28420]

Mr Paice: The Forestry Commission is responsible for developing the standards for sustainable forestry management in the UK. The UK Forestry Standard sets the minimum standards and is accompanied by a series of guidelines providing advice on its implementation.

Already, landowners who wish to enter into the English Woodland Grant Scheme, which supports the management of existing woods and the creation of woodland, must meet the sustainable forestry criteria set out in the UK Forestry Standard. Woodland owners who apply for a felling licence, which is normally required to fell growing trees, are expected to manage their woodland to the UK Forestry Standard. In addition, the demand from purchasers of wood and wood products carrying independent confirmation of sustainable management gives woodland owners an incentive to meet the standards set out in UK Forestry Standard and UK Woodland Assurance Scheme.

The Government will consult early in the new year on the future management and ownership of the public forest estate in England, including options for sustaining the public benefits it currently provides and the use of forestry standards.

Tristram Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) which *(a)* private and *(b)* civil society partners she has consulted in relation to proposed new ownership options for public forests; [28477]

(2) from which *(a)* private and *(b)* civil society partners she plans to invite interest on new ownership options for public forests. [28478]

Mr Paice: I have met a range of representatives from industry and non-governmental organisations in the course of normal business where ideas relating to the public forest estate have been discussed. DEFRA and the Forestry Commission will be consulting early next year on proposals regarding the public forest estate in England. We will invite views from a wide range of potential private and civil society partners on a number of new ownership and management options, while protecting public benefits. We also plan to hold stakeholder workshops as part of the public consultation.

Forestry Commission: Scotland

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) whether she has discussed with the Scottish Executive *(a)* the future of the Forestry Commission Regional Advisory Committee for Scotland and *(b)* the role of the Forestry Commissioners in Scotland; [28300]

(2) whether she has received any request from the Scottish Executive to devolve to them the legislative power to *(a)* enable abolition of the Forestry Commission in Scotland and *(b)* delegate the powers of the Forestry Commissioners in Scotland. [28324]

Mr Paice: Forestry Ministers in England, Wales and Scotland have discussed via correspondence the UK Government's proposals to consult on the future of the public forest estate in England, to abolish the regional advisory committees and to seek the legislative powers in the Public Bodies Bill. Officials will continue to hold discussions on matters relating to Forestry Commission GB. The Bill, as introduced to Parliament, does not give Scottish Ministers or the Scottish Executive the powers to abolish the Forestry Commissioners. The Scottish Government have powers by virtue of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act, to delegate, by order, the powers of the Forestry Commissioners in Scotland.

Meat: Ritual Slaughter

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with her EU counterparts on the provision contained in amendment 205 to the European Parliament proposal to require label information on the kosher slaughter method; what response she received; and if she will make a statement. [28013]

Mr Paice: DEFRA Ministers have held no discussions with EU colleagues on this issue. We do not consider the European Parliament's amendment 205 to the Food Information Regulation to be the correct way to address this, as we would like to see method of slaughter labelling considered in an animal welfare context.

However, we believe people should know what they are buying in shops and when they are eating out and we are discussing with food and catering industries whether labelling and point of sale information can play a greater role in giving consumers an informed choice about the food they buy. All involved agree this is a complex, difficult and sensitive issue.

Military Bases: USA

Caroline Nokes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate the level of income which would accrue to companies based in the UK if US military food supplies were imported via warehouses in the UK rather than in Germany. [27964]

Mr Paice: The decision about the location of food supply warehouses is a matter for the US Government. We therefore have no plans to estimate its financial impact.

Poultry: EU Action

Dr Poulter: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely effects on the competitiveness of the egg industry of the implementation of proposed EU legislation on *(a)* egg grading and *(b)* hen caging. [28231]

Mr Paice: The Department is in close contact with industry and in October I met with the British Egg Industry Council where I stressed my commitment to the 2012 deadline for the conventional cage ban to come into force and to supporting industry throughout the transition.

The UK has suggested the introduction of a Code '4' for eggs produced by hens housed in enriched systems with the Commission, to ensure they can be distinguished from those housed in conventional cages after the ban is introduced. However, the Commission has made it clear that it views the introduction of an additional Code as confusing to consumers. It is not an option it is willing to consider.

On 19 November I met with Commissioner Dalli and others from the Commission to discuss a range of issues which included the 2012 laying hen conventional cage ban. I raised my concerns over the probability of EU-wide non-compliance and have strongly urged the Commission to put sufficient enforcement measures in place to protect compliant producers if other countries do not meet the 2012 deadline.

We will continue to work with the European Commission and industry to ensure that everything is done to protect UK producers who have already made significant investment to comply with the legislation.

Sewers: Repairs and Maintenance

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much local authorities in *(a)* England and *(b)* Milton Keynes spent on the maintenance of sewers in the latest period in which figures are available. [28462]

Richard Benyon: DEFRA does not collate information about expenditure on maintenance of sewers by local authorities.

Timber

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the compliance of *(a)* her Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* its non-departmental public bodies with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber. [27841]

Mr Paice: We have not assessed if the timber and wood derived products procured by DEFRA, its agencies and NDPBs comply with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber.

We have introduced processes to aid compliance with the UK Government timber procurement policy which accords with the UN FAO principles as shown on their website.

In the core Department these include:

A requirement in our Sustainable Procurement Policy Statement for buyers and suppliers to take account of the Government's timber procurement policy;

Inclusion in our standard terms and conditions of contract of requirements for suppliers to comply with the timber procurement policy and meet Government Buying Standards, which cover commodities such as furniture and paper and require compliance with the policy;

Use of PQQs, ITT questions and specifications dealing with the policy where relevant to the subject matter of the contract;

Promotion of Government approved model ITT, model contract condition for timber and wood-derived products and model specification text on DEFRA's suppliers' website;

Promotion on the suppliers' website of workshops for procurers run by the Central Point of Expertise for Timber (CPET);

Master classes and other training to raise buyers' awareness of the Government's timber procurement policy and Government Buying Standards.

The core Department has promoted the use of these processes and standard terms and conditions of contract for sourcing sustainable timber to all DEFRA Executive agencies and NDPBs.

Tuberculosis

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what treatments her Department has recommended that farmers carry out on animals suspected of carrying tuberculosis; and if she will make a statement; [28408]

(2) what procedures her Department follows in respect of the blood testing of animals suspected of having tuberculosis; which officer of her Department or its agencies takes the decision to proceed with a blood test; and if she will make a statement. [28525]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: DEFRA does not recommend any treatment for animals suspected of carrying tuberculosis (TB). Treatment of cattle for TB is explicitly forbidden in both the domestic and EU tuberculosis control legislation. There are several sound scientific and public health reasons for this, including the fact that treatment can mask the reactions to the TB tests in infected animals, thus causing false negative results. In addition, there are no veterinary drugs licensed in the UK for the treatment of TB in cattle or other mammals.

The interferon-gamma test is the only ancillary blood test approved for the detection of TB-infected cattle in the European Union. It is down to member states to define the specific circumstances in which this test is to be deployed in their territory, always in conjunction with the primary tuberculin skin test. The field procedures for blood testing of cattle herds are laid down in the Operations Manual of Animal Health. The laboratory methods are set out in the Veterinary Laboratories Agency standard operating laboratory procedures. In certain prescribed circumstances, the application of the interferon-gamma test in cattle herds is mandatory, whereas in other scenarios its use is subject to a degree of discretion, professional judgement and risk assessment by Animal Health veterinary officers.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Al-Qaeda

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the extent of links between al-Qaeda in the Maghreb and terrorist and paramilitary organisations in *(a)* north Africa, *(b)* the middle east and *(c)* Yemen. [R] [28431]

Alistair Burt: Al-Qaeda's allies and affiliates look to exploit ungoverned space and instability where they can, whether in the Sahel or Yemen, Somalia, Pakistan, Iraq or Afghanistan. These affiliates share al-Qaeda's name, broad objectives and methods. These groups broaden al-Qaeda's reach across the Muslim world and enhance its ability to plan terrorist attacks. We are aware of links between al-Qaeda in the Maghreb and paramilitary organisations in north and west Africa and we continue to monitor these.

Arms: Exports

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to which states arms were exported from the UK in the last 12 months. [29129]

Alistair Burt: For the period January to June 2010, information about UK arms exports is available on the Strategic Export Controls: Reports and Statistics pages on the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills website:

https://www.exportcontroldb.berr.gov.uk/eng/fox/sdb/SDBHOME

Information on UK arms exports for the period July to December 2010 will be available on the same website by April 2011.

For the period January to December 2009, information is available in the United Kingdom Strategic Export Controls Annual Report 2009 which is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website:

http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/about-us/our-publications/sec-2009-ar-data

Auschwitz

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the condition of the site of Auschwitz-Birkenau; what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this issue; and if he will make a statement. [28046]

John Penrose: I have been asked to reply.

No recent reports have been received and no recent discussions have been held with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this issue.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will contribute to the fund responsible for the upkeep of Auschwitz-Birkenau; what recent representations he has received on this issue; and if he will make a statement. [28047]

John Penrose: I have been asked to reply.

The Government are currently considering their position on contributions to the Perpetuity Fund for the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation. We are also contributing to EU discussions on whether to offer funds to the Foundation and this may influence the way the Government approach this issue.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received on funding of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Perpetual Fund; and if he will make a statement. [28048]

John Penrose: I have been asked to reply.

The Managing Director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation visited the Department for Culture, Media and Sport recently to discuss funding. This Department and other Government Departments have received letters from Members of Parliament.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the operation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Perpetual Fund; and if he will make a statement. [28049]

John Penrose: I have been asked to reply.

No recent reports have been received on this issue.

Azerbaijan: NATO

Stephen Gilbert: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on section 35 of the NATO Lisbon Summit declaration offering unequivocal support for Azerbaijan's territorial integrity; and if he will make a statement. [29154]

Mr Lidington: The UK supports the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) summit declaration made at Lisbon. We believe that territorial integrity is one of the principles that should form the basis to any solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, along with respect for the self-determination of people and the non-use of force. The UK continues to support the work of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group and their efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The UK calls for both Armenia and Azerbaijan to focus with renewed energy on achieving a sustainable peace agreement for the stability and security of the region.

British Nationals Abroad

Conor Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British nationals living outside the UK are registered with the LOCATE service in each *(a)* country and *(b)* territory in which the LOCATE service in offered. [28577]

Mr Jeremy Browne: As of 1 December 2010, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's overseas online registration and crisis database, LOCATE, currently holds a total of 49,666 active registrants. This figure breaks down as: 49,623 registrants spread across various countries and 43 registrants in the UK's overseas territories.

British Nationals Abroad: Offences against Children

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British nationals are detained in foreign countries in relation to offences of child sexual abuse. [29216]

Mr Jeremy Browne: According to our records, there are currently a total of 135 British nationals detained in foreign countries in relation to offences of child sexual abuse.

China: Political Prisoners

Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations in public to the government of China to release Liu Xiaobo and all prisoners of conscience on the occasion of Human Rights Day on 10 December 2010. [28596]

Mr Jeremy Browne: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has clearly stated that the decision to award the Nobel peace prize to Liu Xiaobo shines a spotlight on the situation of human rights defenders worldwide. This Government are committed to promoting human rights in foreign policy and support the work of human rights defenders around the world. British Ministers have regularly raised the case of Liu Xiaobo in their engagement with China. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised the case during his visit to China in July this year. We will continue to urge the Chinese Government to release Mr Liu.

The work of human rights defenders is the theme for this year's International Human Rights Day. To mark the occasion we will be issuing a statement to highlight the important work these individuals do, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances, and the work the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is doing to support human rights defenders around the world.

Confliction Prevention: Finance

Yvette Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much funding his Department allocated to conflict prevention in each year since 2005. [27266]

Mr Hague *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* Conflict prevention activity is funded primarily through a tri-departmental fund called the Conflict Pool. This is managed jointly by the Department for International Development, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Ministry of Defence. The Conflict Pool has existed in various forms since 2005 (as the Global Conflict Prevention Pool, Africa Conflict Prevention Pool and Conflict Prevention Pool). Funding for the Conflict Pool is provided through the spending round, separately from departmental expenditure limits. The FCO does not normally contribute additional funds from its own budget. However, in financial year 2009-10 the FCO contributed an additional £2 million from its departmental budget towards a £20 million uplift to the Afghanistan programme.

This financial year, the Conflict Pool is £178.5 million and funds five programmes; four regional: Africa, the middle east, wider Europe and south Asia, and one thematic: Strategic Support to International Organisations. FCO spend through the Conflict Pool is listed in the departmental resource accounts available on the FCO website and in the Library of the House.

In addition to programme activity funded through the Conflict Pool, a large part of the FCO's core bilateral work supports the Government's conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping goals. As this is part of wider bilateral relationships, it is not possible to provide a separate figure for this.

Departmental Conditions of Employment

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements are in place in his Department to enable staff of his Department to propose innovations in working practices to improve service provision. [27609]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office encourages all its staff to offer suggestions on how working practices can be done more innovatively and efficiently. Suggestion schemes regularly receive ideas from staff which are investigated as to their practicality and desirability and are implemented where appropriate.

We ran a specific 'Innovate and Save' scheme earlier this year which generated more than 400 ideas for ways to work differently and increase efficiency. This scheme closed in the summer and we now take proposals from staff as part of our change and efficiency agendas.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28112]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) recognises the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises and is aware of the Government's programme to support them in the UK. While many of the FCO's operations are overseas, which is reflected in its procurement activities, it has been and continues to be supportive of this programme for its UK procurement, and the work the Cabinet Office's Efficiency and Reform Group is undertaking to improve small and medium-sized enterprises' access to forthcoming Government contracts and improve opportunities to win business.

Due to the majority of FCO procurement being undertaken overseas, the FCO does not have significant opportunities for UK third sector organisations. However, it is engaging with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and other leading Departments on this agenda and works, where appropriate, to increase opportunities for such organisations to access and compete for FCO contracts focused on the UK.

EU Law

Mr Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* legislation and *(b)* other measures presented to the Council of Ministers the Government have agreed to adopt since May 2010; which such measures the Government did not support prior to their adoption; and what (i) legislation and (ii) other measures have been adopted in the Council of Ministers on the basis of qualified majority voting on occasions where the UK voted against since May 2010. [27479]

Mr Lidington: The Council of the European Union publishes this information on its website. It can be found at:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/
showPage.aspx?id=551&;lang=EN

Since May 2010, the UK has abstained on the following measures which were adopted by qualified majority voting:

1. Regulation (EU) No 539/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 June 2010 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund as regards simplification of certain requirements and as regards certain provisions relating to financial management PE-CONS 9/3/10 REV 3.

2. Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC PE-CONS 18/2/10 REV 2.

The UK has not voted against any measures adopted on the basis of qualified majority voting.

Foreign Policy

Mr Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what priorities he has set for his Department's most recent strategic framework; and if he will make a statement; [28693]

(2) what priorities he has set for his foreign policy strategy; and if he will make a statement. [28694]

Alistair Burt: In July, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister agreed a new set of foreign policy priorities for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. They are:

> "Britain will pursue an active and activist foreign policy, working with other countries and strengthening the rules-based international system in support of our values to:
>
> Safeguard Britain's national security by countering terrorism and weapons proliferation, and working to reduce conflict.
>
> Build Britain's prosperity by increasing exports and investment, opening markets, ensuring access to resources, and promoting sustainable global growth.
>
> Support British nationals around the world through modern and efficient consular services."

These priorities are at the heart of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Departmental Business Plan, which sets out in detail the foreign policy priorities under the Coalition Agreement and which is published on the Downing Street and Foreign and Commonwealth Office websites. They are consistent with the role of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as set out in the National Security Strategy and the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

International Violence against Women Champion

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the International Violence against Women Champion will exercise ministerial responsibilities in his Department. [28483]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development, the Ministry of Defence and the Government Equalities Office all work on tackling violence against women overseas. Ministerial responsibility for taking forward the UK's work overseas will continue to rest with departmental Ministers.

The champion will encourage relevant Ministers to use all available levers and influence in their domestic, EU and international engagements to raise the profile of this issue overseas.

Iraq: Religious Freedom

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to his Iraqi counterpart on the protection of religious minorities in Iraq. [28922]

Alistair Burt: We utterly condemn the recent attacks on the Christian community of Iraq.

On 10 November I met the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hoshyar Zebari and raised the issue of Iraqi Christians with him. Mr Zebari acknowledged that the protection of Christians was the Iraqi Government's responsibility.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister also raised this in a telephone conversation to Prime Minister al-Maliki on 15 November. Prime Minister al-Maliki again expressed concern at recent developments, and welcomed UK support, particularly on persuading the Christian minority groups to remain in Iraq. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister made clear the Iraqis had the UK's full support.

During his visit to Iraq from 22-25 November my hon. Friend the Minister for the middle east, Alistair Burt, raised the need to improve the protection of Christians and other minorities with all his interlocutors.

The Government will continue to press the Iraqi Government to ensure that Iraqi constitutional commitments to guarantee the rights and freedoms of citizens are respected and protected. We will also continue to urge the Iraqi Government to protect all communities, especially vulnerable minority groups and to deal appropriately with those who are found responsible for any acts of violence and intimidation because of political, ethnic or religious affiliation.

Kazakhstan: Human Rights

David Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the progress of Kazakhstan on pledges on *(a)* human rights and *(b)* other matters made in Madrid in 2007 during its chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. [28040]

Mr Lidington: Kazakhstan has taken some limited steps forward in the fields of human rights and political reform, but further improvements are needed. The UK consistently makes clear the importance it attaches to the human dimension of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), including the obligations to which Kazakhstan has committed itself. I discussed these issues with the Kazakh Government during my visit to Almaty for an informal meeting of OSCE Foreign Ministers in July. During the OSCE summit in Astana on 1 and 2 December 2010, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister raised these issues with the Government of Kazakhstan and my right hon. Friend and I discussed Kazakhstan's reform agenda and human rights record with local non-governmental organisations and representatives of Kazakhstan's opposition parties. We and international partners will continue to encourage the Kazakh authorities, both within and outside the framework of the OSCE, to press ahead with reforms, many of which they themselves have identified as necessary.

Middle East: Armed Conflict

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the number of incidents of cargo ships carrying arms to *(a)* Hamas, *(b)* Hezbollah and *(c)* Iraqi insurgents being seized by state authorities since 1 January 2010; and if he will make a statement. [28486]

Alistair Burt: We have received no recent reports of cargo ships carrying arms to Hamas, Hezbollah or Iraqi insurgents. However, we remain concerned at reports of arms transfers to Hamas and Hizballah more generally and continue to call on all parties in the region to respect UN Security Council Resolutions 1860 and 1701. Together with our international partners we will take action wherever possible to halt the smuggling of illegal arms.

Morocco: British Nationals Abroad

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of UK nationals who have travelled to Morocco in each year since 2000. [28554]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Consular Department only has estimates of the number of British visitors to Morocco for the financial years 1999-2007. These are shown in the following table. These data were drawn from a variety of sources and, because of the lack of consistently reliable sources, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office ceased to collect this information after 2006-07.

Year financial	*Estimated number of British visitors*
1999-2000	490,169
2000-01	90,000
2001-02	346,511
2002-03	122,105
2003-04	134,000
2004-05	170,000
2005-06	270,000
2006-07	265,000

Morocco: Police

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what formal channels for communication and co-operation exist between civilian security forces in the UK and Morocco. [28567]

Alistair Burt: We have a positive working relationship with the Moroccan police, including on a variety of capacity building projects, information sharing and operational co-operation.

Mustapha Salma Ould Sidi Mouloud

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has set objectives for the UK's presidency of the UN Security Council in respect of *(a)* the question of autonomy in the Western Sahara, *(b)* human rights in the Western Sahara and *(c)* the welfare of Mustapha Salman Ould Sidi Mouloud. [R] [28432]

Alistair Burt: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary announced in a statement on 2 November that, under the UK presidency, the UN Security Council would hear updates on progress towards a settlement in Western Sahara. On 16 November we arranged for the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Western Sahara, Ambassador Christopher Ross, to brief the council on the latest round of negotiations between the parties to agree a mutually acceptable and long-lasting political solution to the dispute.

The UK continues to support the idea of independent verification of the human rights situation in Western Sahara. Discussions regarding human rights monitoring in Western Sahara need to explore all options and identify which instrument is best placed to deliver that function.

The case of Mustapha Salma Ould Sidi Mouloud has not been raised at the UN Security Council.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the Government have had *(a)* at the UN Security Council and *(b)* with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees on the welfare of Mustapha Salma Ould Sidi Moulaud. [R] [28433]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is aware of the case of Mr Mustafa Salma Ould Sidi Mouloud, and our embassies in Rabat and Algiers are following events closely. We are concerned that, despite an announcement of his release by the Polisario on 6 October, Mr Salma's whereabouts are still unknown. Our embassy officials have met Mr Salma's family and raised his case with Polisario representatives.

We have not had discussions regarding Mr Salma's welfare at the UN Security Council or with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the legality of the detention of Mustapha Salma Ould Sidi Moulaud in Algeria; on what dates he has made representations to *(a)* the Government of Algeria and *(b)* Polisario on the detention of Mustapha Salma Ould Sidi Moulaud; and on what dates his Department has discussed the future of (A) Western Sahara and (B) Ceuta and Melilla with the Spanish Government since 2005. [R] [28434]

Alistair Burt: We understand that Mustapha Salma Ould Sidi Mouloud was detained by the Polisario, who exercise de facto administration over the Saharawi refugee camps in Tindouf, Algeria. Media in the region have reported that he was released to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) in Mauritania on 1 December. The Government are aware of this case and our embassies in Rabat and Algiers are following events closely. We will continue to monitor developments and call on all parties to adhere to the obligations set out in international conventions in relation to respect for human rights and the protection of refugees.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not made any representations to the Government of Algeria regarding this case. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials met with the Polisario representative in London on 28 October 2010 and reiterated the UK position that Mustapha Salma Ould Sidi Mouloud must have access to a free and fair trial to defend any charges levied against him.

Russia: Politics and Government

Lindsay Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on deaths of journalists in Russia in the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [29324]

Mr Lidington: According to the non-governmental organisation the Glasnost Defence Foundation, 46 journalists have been murdered in Russia since 2005. This includes the murder of Anna Politkovskaya in 2006. We are deeply concerned about attacks on journalists in Russia and the low success rate in investigating and prosecuting crimes against journalists in recent years. The perception of a climate of impunity further undermines freedom of expression and human rights in Russia.

The UK supported EU High Representative Catherine Ashton's statement of 17 November 2010 about attacks on journalists in Russia. We will continue to raise this issue both bilaterally and with our EU partners.

Sudan: Referendums

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance his Department has provided to the Sudanese authorities in advance of the forthcoming referendum. [28671]

Alistair Burt: The UK is providing logistical, technical, and political support to the implementation of the referendum on self-determination for Southern Sudan. Our assistance is provided through a £10 million contribution to the UN Development Programme Basket Fund. We are also providing support to the political talks between the Sudanese parties on border demarcation and security arrangements.

Turks and Caicos Islands

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many officials of his Department are stationed in the Turks and Caicos Islands. [28813]

Alistair Burt: There are five Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials stationed in the Turks and Caicos Islands. In addition, there are two positions in the Governor's Office in Grand Turk filled by officials seconded from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Ministry of Defence.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support Agency

Mr Syms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what criteria the Child Support Agency uses to determine the *(a)* individuals and *(b)* organisations it consults as stakeholders; [27340]

(2) under what circumstances the Child Support Agency *(a)* is required to and *(b)* chooses to consult stakeholders; [27341]

(3) what methods the Child Support Agency uses to consult stakeholders; [27342]

(4) how often representatives of the Child Support Agency met external stakeholders in the latest period for which figures are available; [27343]

(5) with what frequency the Child Support Agency consults *(a)* external organisations and *(b)* members of the public on its activities; [27344]

(6) what recent discussions the Child Support Agency has had on its activities with *(a)* stakeholders and *(b)* other interested parties. [27345]

Maria Miller: The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission is responsible for the child maintenance system. I have asked the Child Maintenance Commissioner to write to the hon. Member with the information requested and I have seen the response.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Child Maintenance Commissioner as the Child Support Agency is now the responsibility of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria the Child Support Agency uses to determine the (a) individuals and (b) organisations it consults as stakeholders. [27340]; and

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions under what circumstances the Child Support Agency (a) is required to and (b) chooses to consult stakeholders. [27341]; and

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what methods the Child Support Agency uses to consult stakeholders. [27342]; and

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how often representatives of the Child Support Agency met external stakeholders in the latest period for which figures are available. [27343]; and

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions with what frequency the Child Support Agency consults (a) external organisations and (b) members of the public on its activities. [27344]; and

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent discussions the Child Support Agency has had on its activities with (a) stakeholders and (b) other interested parties. [27345]

The Commission undertakes high level stakeholder engagement in relation to the child maintenance system in Great Britain. In broad terms, the Commission actively seeks to engage with stakeholders including:

Stakeholders who represent separated parents with a child maintenance arrangement or who would benefit from such an arrangement;

Stakeholders who provide information, advice, support, advocacy or training to separating or separated parents;

Stakeholders who represent professionals whose clients regularly include separating and separated parents and who are in a position to provide information and support on child, maintenance to these parents;

Stakeholders who have an interest in the role that child maintenance plays in the wider policy on families and children and;

Stakeholders who can assist the Commission in the exercise of its statutory functions.

The Commission is also happy to answer questions and have discussions with stakeholders that approach the Commission. It is not uncommon for the Commission to be approached in this way.

The Commission has undertaken to engage with stakeholders on the development of services and changes in policy. A range of methods are used to engage with stakeholders and the methods used are selected in each circumstance on the basis of good practice, practicality and the other needs of all involved. Methods include forums, bilateral meetings, correspondence, telephone conversations, attendance at conferences and formal public consultations.

Due to the frequent and both formal and informal nature of the Commission's engagement with its stakeholders, no figures are collected on the frequency of meetings with stakeholders.

Stakeholders and members of the public are also involved in the development of child maintenance policy through formal public consultations. These are conducted as appropriate and in line with the Government's Code of Conduct on Consultation. In the last year, there has been one consultation, which concluded in June 2010, on miscellaneous child maintenance regulations.

Recently the Commission has been having discussions with stakeholders on developing and enhancing the current Child Maintenance Options service, training professionals to support parents on child maintenance issues and security processes for telephone conversations with Child Support Agency clients and their representatives. The Commission has, together with the Department for Work and Pensions, also been discussing with stakeholders ways in which families can be better supported through the child maintenance system.

I hope you find this answer helpful.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28367]

Chris Grayling: The Department revised its internal policies and guidance in July 2010 with the clear intention of reducing costs. The use of an external venue for any business meeting, including conferences, should now be exceptional and requires the advance approval of a member of the senior civil service.

Compared to the same period last year, spend for the period April to October 2010 reduced by approximately 66%.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions from which local authorities he has received representations on the mobility element of disability living allowance since June 2010; and if he will place in the Library a copy of each item of correspondence with each such local authority. [26251]

Maria Miller: A search of the available data in the Department's ministerial correspondence system has not identified any correspondence addressed to Ministers from local authorities on the mobility element of disability living allowance during the period specified.

An official at Dudley metropolitan borough council has written to officials at the Department for Work and Pensions on this issue.

Employment and Support Allowance: Scotland

Sheila Gilmore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how long on average it has taken for an appeal against refusal of a claim for employment and support allowance to be heard in Scotland since the inception of that allowance. [28344]

Maria Miller: For appeals heard relating to employment and support allowance claims in Scotland, the average time from the Department of Work and Pensions decision to the hearing with the Tribunals Service is around six months.

There is some uncertainty around these timings, as for any given cohort of employment and support allowance claims there will be a number of uncleared cases in the system. The average time from the Department of Work and Pensions decision to the Tribunals Service hearing may therefore change as more appeals are processed.

Employment: Disability

Lindsay Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department plans to extend autism awareness training to all disability employment advisers working in Jobcentre Plus centres. [29326]

Maria Miller: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Darra Singh. I have asked him to provide the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Darra Singh:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question about plans to extend autism awareness training to all disability employment advisers working in Jobcentre Plus centres. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

All Jobcentre Plus advisers receive training to enable them to support disabled people. As part of their training advisers are introduced to Employment and Health Condition Guide notes including background information on a number of conditions, including autism. These guide notes include the implications for work related interviews and employment, the identification of job goals and work solutions and how to use questioning techniques in order to best support autistic customers' job search and return to work. Disability Employment Advisers receive further levels of skills training appropriate to their customers, including skills practice in interviewing an autistic person, to reinforce learning points.

Jobcentre Plus maintains contact with stakeholders and welcomes feedback that helps to improve the quality of the service it offers. Jobcentre Plus maintains regular contact with the National Autistic Society (NAS) who have provided a range of information including contact centre scripts and adviser training details. Jobcentre Plus also chairs a Hidden Impairments National Group with representatives from organisations supporting customers including those with autism. Representatives from both NAS and Autism Plus are members of this group. This group are in the process of developing "e-cards", quickly and easily accessible, intranet based information. The "e-cards" will be available to all Jobcentre Plus staff via the intranet and will contain examples of the difficulties customers with hidden impairments may have in their daily lives as a consequence of their particular condition. These "e-cards" will outline the most appropriate reasonable adjustments Jobcentre Plus advisers can make for customers with hidden impairments and enable our staff to support these customers so that they can more easily access appropriate services.

Last year Jobcentre Plus engaged with two autism telephone tutorials held by the Employers Forum on Disability at which Jobcentre Plus Disability Employment Advisers actively participated. Events such as these help to develop an even greater understanding of autism and the issues related to employment.

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on what date the call for evidence on specialist disability employment support will close. [29327]

Maria Miller: The call for evidence for the review of specialist disability employment support will close on 28 February 2011.

Equality: Disability

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the oral answer of 18 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 618, on equality (disabled people), when he expects to publish the equality impact assessment in respect of the effects of the comprehensive spending review on disabled people. [29215]

Maria Miller: Throughout the spending review process, HM Treasury has looked closely at the impact that decisions may have on different groups in society—and published an 'Overview of the Equalities Impacts of the Spending Review' on 20 October alongside the spending review announcements.

We also now have a full summary of the changes which affect disabled people on the Department for Work and Pension's website at:

www.dwp.gov.uk/adviser/updates/spending-review-2010

Within the Department for Work and Pensions, all Budget and spending review measures will be equality impact assessed. Where the detail of policies is still being developed we will publish equality impact assessments at the most appropriate time, for example alongside the Welfare Reform Bill. Some policies, such as changes to the disability living allowance assessment, will be subject to consultation and, therefore, the equality impact assessment will be published at a later date, when policies are finalised. The equality impacts of Budget changes have been published where detail of the policy has been finalised, and can be found on this Department's website at:

www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/impact%2Dassessments/equality%2Dimpact%2Dassessments/

Health and Safety Executive

John Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent assessment he has made of the effects of his proposed changes to the Health and Safety Executive on *(a)* workplace, *(b)* emergency worker and *(c)* firefighter safety; and what recent discussions on firefighter safety he has had with Ministerial colleagues in the Department for Communities and Local Government. [28547]

Chris Grayling: I am currently considering the proposals of HSE for delivering a renewed and effective health and safety regulatory service in the light of the challenges of reduced Government funding, in line with most other parts of the public sector, and also the recommendations made by Lord Young of Graffham in his report "Common Sense, Common Safety", which the Government have accepted. At their heart will be the principle that those workplaces presenting low risks and good standards of compliance with health and safety laws should receive less inspection from the regulators. We will look to widen cost recovery in relation to businesses with a level of risk justifying a higher level of regulatory intervention or where material fault is found and enforcement action is necessary. We now have the opportunity to both reduce bureaucracy for business and put the emphasis back on addressing real risks and preventing death, injury and diseases to those at work and those affected by work-related activities.

With regard to the police and fire services the Government have accepted Lord Young's recommendations. The Health and Safety Executive is consulting with the Crown Prosecution Service regarding guidance for regulators on the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to ensure that it is consistent with and reflects the principles already agreed with the two services, as set out in HSE's high level statements "Striking the balance between operational and health and safety duties in the Police Service" and "Striking the balance between operational and health and safety duties in the Fire and Rescue Service".

John Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent assessment he has made of the effects of his proposed changes to the Health and Safety Executive on standards in recording of *(a)* injuries and *(b)* fatalities in the work place. [28548]

Chris Grayling: The Health and Safety Executive will conduct a formal consultation on any proposals to amend the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), that place a duty on employers and others to report work-related injuries to health and safety enforcing authorities. An impact assessment that will consider the costs and benefits of any proposed change will accompany any proposals.

Housing Benefit

Miss Begg: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he has made an estimate of the number of households in Scotland which will be affected by the proposed capping of household benefits from 2013. [27178]

Chris Grayling: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Glasgow East (Margaret Curran) on 13 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 345-46W.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of his Department's budget he plans to allocate to *(a)* pensioners, *(b)* physically and mentally disabled people and *(c)* carers for assistance with housing in each year of the spending review period following the implementation of his proposals for spending reductions in respect of housing benefit; and if he will make a statement. [27228]

Steve Webb: Decisions on who is awarded discretionary housing payments are for local authorities.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Department of Health has *(a)* produced and *(b)* contributed to the production of an assessment of the likely effects on the health of vulnerable groups of the implementation of the Government's proposed housing benefit changes; and if he will make a statement. [28198]

Steve Webb: The Department of Health has been involved in assessing the impact of the changes we are making to housing benefit from April 2011 and has contributed to the impact assessment that we published on 30 November 2010. The assessment is available on the Department for Work and Pensions website:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/lha-impact-nov10.pdf

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he plans to announce his proposals for reform of housing benefit payments to pensioners. [28208]

Steve Webb: The Welfare Reform Bill, which we plan to introduce in early 2011, will include detail of the provision for housing support for pensioners.

Innovation

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what structures his Department has established to encourage innovation among its staff. [29214]

Chris Grayling: The Department has established The DWP Lean Project and Innovation Team to encourage innovation among its staff.

Through the DWP Lean Project, which began in 2006, we are using lean tools and techniques in order to capture ideas from our frontline staff, to bring about innovative improvements in the way we work and manage our business.

More recently, BIS has been looking at how to make the public sector more innovative and as such has sponsored the key programme which is being delivered by DWP to develop a set of on-line innovation tools. These tools are being developed for use across the public sector to build innovation capability, in the interests of gaining efficiency savings, reducing duplication, stimulating the wider economy and encouraging innovation through competition and innovative procurement. The three component tools being developed are:

'Ideas Street' to capture staff ideas

Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI)—an automated pre-commercial procurement tool to provide more flexibility in developing innovation

'SPARK'—a collaborative showcase platform and central public sector repository of innovative projects and products.

Within DWP we are taking a 'crowdsourcing' approach to encourage innovation amongst the Department's staff. This involves using the 'Ideas Street' platform to set innovation challenges and engage with frontline staff to generate ideas around the challenges they face. The 'Ideas Street' allows the 'crowd' to comment, develop and vote on the ideas. This process results in only the good ideas with support and approval ratings being put before a panel of experts who determine whether to develop a business case for approval by the change committee. A number of challenges are already in place; for example:

JCP Paper Reduction programme

LEAN team

PDCS "Are We Spending Wisely?" initiative

Corporate IT cost reductions

This is intended to increase the breadth of challenges across the Department.

Jobcentre Plus: Buildings

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average cost per square metre is of jobcentre premises rented by *(a)* Trillium and *(b)* his Department. [28868]

Chris Grayling *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: The (national) average cost per square metre for Jobcentre Plus premises is £373.29, which includes rent, business rates and other components that make up the unitary charge paid by the Department to Telereal Trillium for the provision of fully fitted and serviced accommodation. The average for London is £483.48.

Jobcentre Plus: Disability

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what training disability employment advisers are required to undertake as a condition of their role in Jobcentre Plus; and who provides that training. [27727]

Maria Miller: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Darra Singh. I have asked him to provide the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Ruth Owen:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what training disability employment advisers are required to undertake as a condition of their role in Jobcentre Plus; and who provides that training. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to Darra Singh as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus. As Darra Singh is currently unavailable, I am replying in his absence.

Disability Employment Advisers (DEA) are responsible for providing support to customers who, due to their disability or health condition, may need additional help in finding and retaining work and supporting development. This is a specialist role.

In terms of training, the DEA initially completes 96 hours of induction and foundation learning which provides an introduction to their working environment, generic knowledge of customer service, diversity and equality policies and an introduction to accessing information via the DWP intranet.

This would be followed by 205 hours of learning specific to the Personal Adviser (PA) job role consisting of Adviser Skills learning, with a core series of Adviser Skills workshops and periods of supported workplace consolidation, to enable the advisers to effectively interview customers, diagnose their needs, identify challenges to work and solutions to support customers. The workshops provide advisers with other knowledge and procedural learning to complement their skills such as identifying local labour market information and job search skills.

Following the standard PA learning programme the DEA will go on to complete an additional 59 hours of specialist learning to support customers with severe health conditions.

This DEA learning has been designed by the Jobcentre Plus Learning Division with input from specialist DWP Work Psychologists. In addition, for specific elements of the learning there has been liaison with external organisations such as Mencap, to help advisers understand the needs of customers with mental health issues. Trainers delivering DEA learning materials in addition to being skilled learning professionals will have also attended events with DWP Work Psychologists to ensure that they are fully able to deliver this specialised learning.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Jobcentre Plus disability employment advisers there are *(a)* in Bristol, *(b)* in the South West and *(c)* nationally. [27728]

Maria Miller: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Darra Singh. I have asked him to provide the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Ruth Owen:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many Jobcentre Plus disability employment advisers there are in a) Bristol; b) in the South West; and c) nationally. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to Darra Singh as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus. As Darra Singh is currently not available, I am replying in his absence.

The information in the following table is set out in full time equivalents. This is the latest published data as at June 2010.

	Numbers of disability employment advisers
Bristol	3
South West	40
National	491

This data is drawn from an internal Departmental system used to monitor staff deployment trends.

Mortgages: Government Assistance

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of households at risk of repossession as a result of changes to mortgage interest support provided by his Department; and if he will estimate the cost to local authorities arising from such repossessions. [28062]

Steve Webb: The Department does not capture information on reasons for ending a benefit claim, including support for mortgage interest, so does not capture the number of claimants who no longer receive support for mortgage interest payments because they have been repossessed.

The Department is in the process of developing a model to estimate the impact of changes to support for mortgage interest on the number of repossessions. However any estimates will always be limited since detailed case-by-case information, such as arrears at the start of a claim, is not collected by the Department. Furthermore, the relationship between arrears and continued home ownership is a complex one dependent on more than the level of support for mortgage interest payable. The Department will consider whether the results can be used publicly once this work is complete.

The Council of Mortgage Lenders has told the Department that it expects lenders to continue to exercise forbearance where it is fair to do so for the borrower, and the borrower has a chance of paying off any arrears in the future. The Council of Mortgage Lenders thinks that where arrears levels increase for some borrowers as a result of the change in the standard interest rate this does not translate into an immediate repossession risk.

Information on the cost to local authorities arising from repossessions is not available.

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what mechanisms will be in place to assist those receiving mortgage interest support who *(a)* are receiving less than 70% of their mortgage interest costs and *(b)* have not been able to enter into a forbearance agreement with their mortgage lender under his Department's proposals. [28196]

Steve Webb: The Council of Mortgage Lenders has told the Department that it expects lenders to continue to exercise forbearance where it is fair to do so for the borrower, and the borrower has a chance of paying off any arrears in the future. The Council of Mortgage Lenders thinks that where arrears levels increase for some borrowers as a result of the change in the standard interest rate this does not translate into an immediate repossession risk.

Under the Pre-Action Protocol, lenders must prove they have considered all other options before trying to repossess a property. For example, they may agree to change or lengthen the term of the loan; accept reduced payments in the short term or add the debt to the amount borrowed.

Customers facing repossession who cannot meet their mortgage payments may be able to use the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.

The Government are continuing to explore with mortgage lenders the scope for them to "freeze" benefit claimants' mortgage accounts and apply a standard interest rate for a fixed period.

Poverty: Children

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many children he expects to be living in poverty in each of the next five years. [24214]

Maria Miller: The Government have not forecast how many children they expect to be in poverty each year. Child poverty is dependent on a number of factors which are difficult to reliably predict. However, we have published analysis to show that the measures that can be robustly assessed from the spending review and June Budget will not lead to a measurable increase in child poverty over the next two years. Furthermore, the Government expect the impact of universal credit to lift 350,000 children out of poverty by 2018.

The Government remain committed to their goal of ending child poverty by 2020.

Remploy: Clydebank

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the likely effects of the outcomes of the review of Remploy on the operation of the Remploy frontline textiles facility in Clydebank. [28125]

Maria Miller: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Wrexham (Ian Lucas) on 26 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 195W.

Social Security Benefits

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans there are for staff of *(a)* HM Revenue and Customs administering tax credits and *(b)* local government staff administering housing benefit after the implementation of the proposed universal credit; and if he will make a statement. [26259]

Steve Webb: Over time, the financial support currently delivered by HMRC and local authorities through tax credits and housing benefit will be replaced by universal credit. This process will not be completed until universal credit is fully in place, around four years after implementation begins in 2013. The extent of the changes and efficiencies will depend on the eventual design of universal credit and its delivery.

I am working closely with the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, my hon. Friend the Member for South West Hertfordshire (Mr Gauke) to ensure a smooth transition to universal credit for both DWP and HMRC. My Department is also working with representatives from the local authority associations on the implications of universal credit for local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many households which are entitled to *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* council tax benefit are also entitled to tax credits. [26261]

Steve Webb: Information on housing benefit and council tax recipients who are also entitled to tax credits is not available.

The Department does collect information on income from tax credits on the housing benefit/council tax benefit data source (Single Housing Benefit Extract) but to assess the completeness of recording and quality assure the figures would incur disproportionate cost.

Estimates of the size of the entitled population for housing benefit and council tax benefit can be obtained from the National Statistics series 'Income Related Benefits: Estimates of Take-Up'. The most recent results refer to 2008-09 which were published in June 2010, and are shown in the following table. Estimates of those who are entitled but not receiving are based on the Family Resources Survey and are presented as ranges to account for the inherent uncertainty in survey data.

Thousand

			Entitled non-recipients		*Entitled population*	
		Recipients	*Lower*	*Upper*	*Lower*	*Upper*
Housing benefit	Pensioners	1,510	220	380	1,730	1,890
	Non-pensioners	2,530	440	820	2,970	3,350
	Total	4,030	680	1,180	4,710	5,210
Council tax benefit	Pensioners	2,520	1,430	1,970	3,950	4,490
	Non-pensioners	2,490	590	990	3,080	3,480
	Total	5,010	2,130	2,930	7,140	7,940

Source: Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up 2008-09.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the likely change in levels of benefit take-up following the introduction of the universal credit in *(a)* 2013-14 and *(b)* 2014-15. [26642]

Steve Webb: We expect universal credit to improve take-up in two ways. First, universal credit will be much simpler than the existing arrangements, so it will be easier for people to understand whether they have an entitlement. Secondly, universal credit replaces support that is currently provided through a number of different benefits and tax credits. Under the current system people need to claim separately for these different benefits whereas in universal credit this support will be available through a single claim.

Departmental estimates suggest that once universal credit has been fully implemented, over 80% of people will take up their full entitlement to universal credit, which translates to over 90% of overall potential universal credit expenditure.

This is a significant improvement on take-up under the current system:

Benefit/Tax Credit	*Caseload take-up rate*
Income support and income-related employment and support allowance	78-90
Housing benefit (including local housing authority)	77-86
Council tax benefit	63-70
Jobseeker's allowance	47-59
Child tax credit	79-84
Working tax credit	55-59

After the introduction of universal credit there will be a number of years of transition as existing cases migrate to the new system. The information requested could not be estimated for this transition period without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the household benefit cap to be implemented in 2013 is to apply to households in temporary accommodation. [29026]

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether households in temporary accommodation and in receipt of local housing allowance will be affected by the proposed upper limit on benefit entitlement. [25093]

Steve Webb: The current assumption is that the upper limit on benefit entitlement will apply to all housing benefit recipients, including those in non-mainstream accommodation such as temporary accommodation.

Welfare State: Public Expenditure

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the amount of public expenditure allocated to welfare in *(a)* 2010, *(b)* 2011, *(c)* 2012, *(d)* 2013 and *(e)* 2014. [27324]

Chris Grayling: The Office for Budget Responsibility published benefit forecasts on 29 November.

The information is available in table 1.4 at

http://budgetresponsibility.independent.gov.uk/d/fiscal_supplementary_tables_291110.xls

Detailed benefit expenditure tables are in preparation and will be published in due course at:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/index.php?page=expenditure

Winter Fuel Payments

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects winter fuel payments to be made in respect of winter 2010-11. [28620]

Steve Webb: In respect of winter 2010-11, the despatch of winter fuel payments began on 8 November 2010 and will continue until June 2011. Customers who are not in receipt of a benefit and who do not, therefore, automatically qualify for a winter fuel payment, have until 30 March 2011 to make their claim. This means that we will not be able to provide exact numbers until the end of June 2011.

However, most payments, including those for customers who automatically qualify, will be made by the end of December 2010. Approximately 11 million payments have been issued to date.

For winter 2009-10 12.8 million payments were made and 99.9% of customers who automatically qualify for a winter fuel payment received their payments by 31 December 2009.

HEALTH

Compulsory Redundancy: NHS

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the likely effect on the number of posts and compulsory redundancies in the NHS of the outcomes of the spending review. [28716]

Mr Simon Burns: The Government have fulfilled their commitment to give the NHS a real-terms increase in funding each year. However, the NHS must make up to £20 billion of efficiency savings by 2014, through reducing bureaucracy and working differently. Every penny saved will be reinvested to support better outcomes for patients, with NHS trusts and foundation trusts making decisions regarding their own staff, based on the services needed locally and informed by sound clinical advice and patient choice.

NHS Funding

Karl Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with the NHS Confederation on the effects on NHS services of reductions in local government funding. [28717]

Mr Lansley: I have regular discussions with key national stakeholders, including the NHS Confederation, at which a full range of topics are discussed.

NHS Reorganisation

Pat Glass: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had with the Royal College of General Practitioners on his proposals for reorganisation of the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [28718]

Mr Lansley: I have regular discussions with key national organisations, including the Royal College of General Practitioners, relating to the Government's long-term vision for the NHS.

Community Contract Tendering

Karen Lumley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the operation of the tendering process for NHS community contracts; and if he will make a statement. [28719]

Mr Simon Burns: The tendering of community services is a matter for local commissioners.

We have published clear guidance to primary care trusts which they are required to follow when using procurement to improve services for patients.

Newark Hospital

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has for the future provision of services at Newark hospital. [28720]

Mr Simon Burns: This is a matter for the local NHS. This Government believe decisions about changes to health services must be led locally by clinicians and patients, not decided by managers behind closed doors or centrally imposed by politicians.

Elective Surgery

Ian Murray: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the likely average waiting time for elective surgery as at 31 March 2011. [28721]

Mr Simon Burns: The national health service needs to deliver the best care for patients — the right treatment at the right time in the right place.

Clinical priority will remain the main determinant of when patients should be treated.

Dementia

Duncan Hames: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what priority is given to the allocation of funding from his Department's research budget for research which may lead to improvements in the detection and treatment of dementia. [28722]

Paul Burstow: Dementia devastates the lives of thousands of people in this country. The coalition's programme for government specifically noted our intention to prioritise dementia research — recognising the key role of research in developing improved detection and treatment options. The recent spending review confirmed that the Department of Health will increase spending on health research in real terms.

Aortic Aneurysm: Screening

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have been screened for abnormal aortic aneurysms in each NHS hospital since 2000. [28163]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department does not hold these data centrally. However, since the phased introduction of the NHS abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening programme in 2009, 37,227 men have been screened to date. Full national roll-out of the screening programme is expected to be completed by the end of 2012-13.

The following table shows the number of men screened in programmes that are currently offering screening to men aged 65 for AAA:

Current provider	*Total subjects*
Gloucester AAA screening programme	5,581
Heart of England AAA screening programme	1,691
Leicester AAA screening programme	6,486
Manchester AAA screening programme	5,613
North Central London AAA screening programme	114
South Devon AAA screening programme	5,839
South West London programme	5,834
West Sussex AAA screening programme	6,069
Total	37,227

Source:
Data provided by the NHS abdominal aortic aneurysm screening programme

Blood: Hepatitis

Mr Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the hon. Member for Sleaford and North Hykeham of 2 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 761W, on contaminated blood products: compensation, on what date he plans to report the outcome of the review of payments for hepatitis C infection. [28820]

Anne Milton: We expect the review to be completed before Christmas 2010 but a date for announcing the outcome of the review is yet to be agreed.

Dental Services

Jonathan Reynolds: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment the Secretary of State has made of the adequacy of provision of dentistry services on the NHS. [28578]

Mr Simon Burns: Primary care trusts are currently responsible for commissioning sufficient primary care dentistry to meet local demand. Under the proposals set out in the White Paper "Equity and Excellence Liberating the NHS", the NHS Commissioning Board would, subject to the outcome of consultation and parliamentary approval, take on responsibility for commissioning primary care dentistry and, if locally required, increasing those services to meet demand.

The latest statistics on access to national health service dentistry show that in the 24 months up to 30 September 2010, 28.7 million individuals saw an NHS dentist (55.8% of the population), an increase of 242,000 since May 2010. The GP Patient survey for April-June 2010 found that 93% of people who tried to make an appointment with an NHS dentist in the previous two years said they had been successful.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28358]

Mr Simon Burns: The Chief Secretary to the Treasury announced a package of departmental measures in May that are designed to deliver efficiency savings of some £6 billion in the current financial year. These measures include a freeze on communications, marketing and advertising, the definition of which includes expenditure on conferences.

In response to the introduction of these measures the Department of Health has implemented a range of controls which includes the establishment of a 'Communications Control Panel' which scrutinises business cases from within the Department and its arm's-length bodies. Beyond delegated limits, Cabinet Office approval has to be sought.

For this financial year we are forecasting a reduction of £90 million in expenditure on communications, advertising and marketing, of which conferences form part.

Departmental Management Consultants

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent on management consultancy in respect of the *(a)* cancer pathways and *(b)* world class commissioning programme. [29155]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department has not directly funded management consultancy in respect of the cancer pathways. The National Cancer Action Team and NHS Improvement are taking forward projects relating to national cancer pathways, and this work may include the use of management consultants where appropriate. Information relating to such expenditure is not held centrally.

During financial years 2008-09 and 2009-10 the Department spent £10,243,701.51 (including VAT) on management consultancy in respect of world class commissioning. The current Government are not continuing with this programme.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working within his private office in each of the last five years. [28563]

Mr Simon Burns: The information requested would be available only at disproportionate cost.

Since 2008 an allowance has been paid to junior private office staff in lieu of overtime payments. The number of staff in the Secretary of State's private office has varied over that time and has not been recorded centrally. However it is currently lower than in recent years. Since August 2010 this information has been recorded centrally. Currently nine junior staff receive a total of £58,519 per annum as a private office allowance.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28379]

Mr Simon Burns: The requested information is not held centrally and could be identified only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate he has made of the number of questions to his Department tabled in the *(a)* House of Commons and *(b)* House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [28496]

Mr Simon Burns: Guidance to Departments states that they should not delay preparing an answer to a parliamentary question until 'round robin' advice is provided and should not miss the targets for similar reasons. We do not record details of the reasons for delays in answering particular questions but from the start of this session until 19 November we have answered 98% of named day questions on the date specified, 95% of Commons ordinary questions within five sitting days and 90% of Lords written questions within 10 working days.

NHS Commissioning Board

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 16 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 765W, on commissioning of National Specialised Services, by what process he plans to determine which specialised services he will ask the NHS Commissioning Board to commission; what criteria relating to those services he plans to use in making his decisions; and whether he plans to undertake consultation to inform his decisions. [28613]

Mr Simon Burns: Issues around the identification of services which the National Health Service Commissioning Board will commission will be taken forward as part of the detailed design work for the board.

Savernake Hospital: PFI

Claire Perry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the total running costs for Savernake hospital was paid to the private finance initiative provider in each year from 2005 to 2009; and what percentage of the total running costs are expected to be paid to the private finance initiative provider in *(a)* 2010 and *(b)* 2011. [28314]

Mr Simon Burns: The information is not available in the format requested. However, data for net operating expenses for Wiltshire primary care trust (PCT) in respect of its private finance initiative (PFI) scheme for Savernake hospital are set out in the following table.

Data are not held centrally for 2010-11 or 2011-12.

Wiltshire PCT: Proportion of total net operating costs relating to PFI

	Percentage of total revenue expenditure relating to PFI
2005-06	0.1
2006-07	0.1
2007-08	0.1
2008-09	0.1
2009-10	0.1

Notes:
1. The percentages provided represent the net operating expenses in respect of PFI schemes as a proportion of total net operating costs.
2. 2005-06 to 2008-09 figures compiled under UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.
3. 2009-10 figures were compiled under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) under which PFI costs in the audited summarisation schedules of trusts are split between capital repayments and revenue expenditure elements, which does not make a precise like for like comparison with earlier years in this table possible. However, an estimate of the PFI unitary payment for 2009-10 is held centrally by the Department as well as the audited outturn for the net operating costs for the PCT for this year; an estimated percentage figure for this year has therefore been calculated using these two figures.

Source:
Audited summarisation schedules of the PCT for 2005-06 to 2009-10

South London Healthcare NHS Trust: Manpower

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department holds information on the proportion of staff employed by South London Healthcare NHS Trust who are *(a)* non-medical staff, *(b)* administrators, *(c)* managers and *(d)* senior managers. [28446]

Mr Simon Burns: Information is not collected in the format requested.

The following table provides the numbers of national health service staff employed in the South London Healthcare NHS Trust by main staff groups as at 30 September 2009.

NHS hospital and community health services: NHS staff in the South London Healthcare NHS Trust by main staff group, as at 30 September 2009

		Percentage
All NHS staff		100
Medical and dental staff	Hospital and community health services doctors and dentists[1]	12.8
All non-medical staff		87.2
Of which	Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	37.6
	Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical	10.3
	Support to clinical staff[2]	14.8
	Support to scientific, therapeutic and technical staff[3]	3.9
	Maintenance and works	0.4
	Administrative and clerical staff	18.5
	Central functions[4]	8.4

NHS hospital and community health services: NHS staff in the South London Healthcare NHS Trust by main staff group, as at 30 September 2009

		Percentage
	Hotel, property and estates[5]	0.2
	Scientific, therapeutic, and technical support[6]	1.6
	Clinical support[7]	8.3
	Ambulance service support	0.0
	Manager	0.9
	Senior manager	0.8

[1] Excludes hospital practitioners and clinical assistants in headcount, most of these also work as a general practitioner.

[2] Nurse learners, nursery nurse, nursing assistant/auxiliary, health care assistant, support worker.

[3] Assistant practitioner, assistant, student/trainee.

[4] Central functions, this group includes areas such as personnel, finance, information technology, legal services, library services, health education and general management support services.

[5] Hotel, property and estates, this group includes clerical and administrative staff working in areas such as laundry, catering, domestic services and gardens.

[6] Scientific, therapeutic and technical support staff, such as radiography receptionists, medical records officers and medical secretaries.

[7] Clinical support includes clerical and administrative staff and maintenance and works staff working specifically in clinical areas, for example medical secretaries and medical records officers.

Notes:

1. All percentages are as a percentage of 'all NHS staff in the Trust, which numbered 7,111 on 30 September 2009. 2. Percentages are calculated using headcount

Data Quality: The NHS Information Centre for health and social care seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data but responsibility for data accuracy lies with the organisations providing the data. Methods are continually being updated to improve data quality where changes impact on figures already published. This is assessed but unless it is significant at national level figures are not changed. Impact at detailed or local level is footnoted in relevant analyses.

Source:

The NHS Information Centre for health and social care Non-Medical Workforce Census

Southern Cross Healthcare

Mr Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with Southern Cross Healthcare on the continuation of contracts with local authorities for the provision of care for residents. [28688]

Paul Burstow: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to him on 2 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 1014W

Stem Cells: Research

Michael Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding his Department has provided for stem cell research projects since 2009; and if he will make a statement. [29165]

Mr Simon Burns: The latest available figures are for the financial year 2009-10.

Total spend on stem cell research in the National Institute for Health Research Biomedical Research Units and Biomedical Research Centres in financial year 2009-10 was £2,745,516.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Audit Commission: Redundancy Pay

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 654W, on redundancy: Audit Commission, what the cost to the public purse was of each payment to the Director of Communications and Public Reporting of the Audit Commission on his departure from post on grounds of redundancy; how many other directors have left on similar terms in the last three years; and at what cost. [29357]

Robert Neill: This is an operational matter for the Audit Commission and I have asked the chief executive of the Audit Commission to write to my hon. Friend directly.

Letter from Eugene Sullivan, dated 7 December 2010:

Your Parliamentary Question outlined above has been passed to me to reply.

My response to your earlier Parliamentary Question (Answer of 3 December 2010, Official Report, column 1055W) explained that the Audit Commission's former Managing Director for Communications and Public Reporting received a redundancy payment of £10,178.54 gross, plus eight weeks payment in lieu of notice of £20,357.08 gross.

The cost to the public purse was therefore £10,178.54, plus £20,357.08

There were no other costs to the public purse in relation to this.

No other Directors have left the Commission in similar terms in the last three years.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much his Department and its predecessors spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28156]

Robert Neill: The Department does not retain spend data relating to press cuttings services for the full period in question.

The Department's accounting system records the following expenditure data for the last two complete financial years and expenditure to date in 2010-11 by the Communication Directorate:

Organisation	*2008 -09*	*2009 -10*	*[1]2010-11*
Durrants (National press cuttings agency)	159,570	132,300	33,729.48
Precise (formerly EDS) (Regional press cuttings agency)	28,015.04	37,450.78	22,127.49
Total	187,585.04	169,750.78	55,856.97

[1] Spend to date

For information related to spend on press cuttings services in 2005-2008, I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my right hon. Friend the right hon. Friend the Member for South West Surrey (Mr Hunt) on 29 October 2008, *Official Report*, 1138W.

In September 2010 the regional cuttings service was cancelled and the national cuttings service moved to an electronic-only format with a limited list of recipients. Neither DCLG Ministers nor officials in the Department now receive hard copy press cuttings. Ministers have taken the view that an excessive and unnecessary amount of taxpayers' money was being spent on press cuttings.

The Department estimates that the cancellation of the regional cuttings service and streamlining of the national cuttings service will save approximately £16,000 and £19,000 respectively in the remainder of this financial year.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28840]

Robert Neill: The information is as follows:

	Annual cost (£)[1]
2008-09	99,776.31
2009-10	95,462.11

[1] Annual cost includes mileage expense in passenger and luggage allowance

EU Grants and Loans

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on the delivery of the North East England 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund Competitiveness programme after March 2011. [29081]

Robert Neill: I have worked closely with my colleagues on the future delivery of economic development and the European Regional Development Fund. My Department is the Managing Authority for English European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programmes and is therefore responsible for the delivery of the North East ERDF programme after 2011. My officials have been holding ongoing discussions with their colleagues in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills about the arrangements for transferring the intermediate body functions from the Regional Development Agencies.

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether his Department is to receive all outstanding funds from the current European Regional Development Fund. [29265]

Robert Neill: Yes, we expect to receive and spend all the funds that have been allocated to England from the European Regional Development Fund during the current 2007-13 programming period.

Fire Services

John Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 8 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 2WS, on the fire and rescue service, which disruptions to fire and rescue services would trigger a business continuity plan; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to *(a)* metropolitan, *(b)* combined and *(c)* shire fire authorities of developing and implementing such a plan. [28543]

Robert Neill: Fire and rescue authorities, as Category 1 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, have a statutory duty to have business continuity management plans in place for emergencies. A range of disruptions could result in fire and rescue authorities triggering business continuity plans. In its recent report, "Business Continuity in the Fire and Rescue Service", the Audit Commission identified a number of possible causes of disruption including extreme weather, industrial action, a flu pandemic, information communications technology failures, power cuts and fires.

I have made no estimate of the average cost of making business continuity arrangements to fire and rescue services.

Homelessness: Milton Keynes

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what his most recent estimate is of the number of people who are homeless in Milton Keynes. [28641]

Grant Shapps: Information about local authorities' discharge of their duties under homelessness legislation is collected on quarterly PIE returns. Summary information about English local housing authorities' actions under the homelessness legislation (part 7 of the Housing Act 1996) is collected at local authority level, and published by the Department in the quarterly Statistical Release on Statutory Homelessness, available both in the Library of the House and via the CLG website:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingresearch/housingstatistics/housingstatisticsby/homelessnessstatistics/publicationshomelessness/

Data collected include the number of households accepted by local housing authorities as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need, and therefore owed a main homelessness duty (to secure that suitable accommodation is available). If a settled home is not immediately available, the authority must secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available and this information is also collected.

Information is also collected on rough sleeping. Since 1998, only councils in areas with a known, or suspected, rough sleeping problem were required to conduct an official rough sleeper count—which meant that only 70 councils submitted information to central Government. Figures published in July 2010 showed that under this previous method, on any given night there were 440 rough sleepers in England. However, when the remaining 256 councils provided estimates of the scale of the problem in their areas, this added a further estimated 807 rough sleepers taking the national total to 1,247 rough sleepers on any given night.

Under new guidance all councils across England will now provide information on rough sleeping. This move follows consultation with homelessness charities and councils and is aimed at getting a clearer picture of the scale of the problem in each area so more targeted support can be provided to some of the most vulnerable in society.

Rough sleeping figures are published by the Department on the CLG website:

- http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/roughsleepingcount2010

Housing: Construction

Andrew Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment he has made of the effect of the High Court ruling on regional housing targets on his Department's instruction to councils that they should no longer take account of such targets when considering individual planning applications. [28302]

Greg Clark: I am placing in the Library a copy of the advice that we have published on my Department's website on the status of the Chief Planner's letter to local authorities.

Housing: Insulation

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 27 July 2010, *Official Report*, column 888W, on insulation: housing, what monitoring he plans to undertake to assess whether his expectation that home insulation measures will continue to play a central role under the Government's new Green Deal programme is met. [28663]

Charles Hendry: I have been asked to reply.

Through the Energy Bill, we will seek the powers to enable us to require regular reporting on the measures, including insulation, delivered under the Green Deal and a new Energy Company Obligation.

Listed Buildings: Theatres

Andrew Bridgen: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps his Department is taking to protect listed theatre buildings from unscrupulous developers. [28827]

Robert Neill: The protection of listed buildings, including theatres, is a matter for local planning authorities. The Theatres Trust is consulted on any applications for planning permission affecting a theatre.

A listed building may not be demolished, or altered in a way that would affect its special architectural or historic interest, without the consent of the local planning authority. Failure to obtain consent is an offence carrying a maximum penalty of six months' imprisonment or a £20,000 fine, or both, on summary conviction, or of two years' imprisonment or an unlimited fine, or both, on conviction on indictment.

Local planning authorities may also issue a listed building enforcement notice if any works that require consent are being or have been undertaken without consent. The notice may require the restoration of the building, mitigation of the effects of the works or compliance with any listed building consent that may be in force. Failure to comply with a listed building enforcement notice is an offence carrying a maximum penalty of a £20,000 fine on summary conviction, or an unlimited fine on conviction on indictment. The local planning authority also has the power to take the steps required by the enforcement notice if it has not been complied with in the time allowed and to recover its expenses from the owner.

Local authorities have powers to serve a repairs notice on an owner who fails to take reasonable steps to preserve a listed building. If the notice is not complied with, compulsory purchase powers are available to enable the authority to secure the building's preservation.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he has made an estimate of the gross domestic product that would be generated as a result of the activity of local enterprise partnerships. [28783]

Robert Neill: The recent "Local Growth: realising every place's potential" White Paper explained that local enterprise partnerships are one of several policies that we are promoting in terms of a new approach to local growth. It states that the Government will judge its overarching economic policy on whether it delivers strong, sustainable and balanced growth of income and employment over the long term.

Individual partnerships will be directly accountable to their local communities as to how they achieve their local economies priorities. Therefore, the Government will not be estimating the amount of additional gross domestic product that would be generated as a result of the creation of local enterprise partnerships.

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans he has for collaboration between local authorities and businesses within different local enterprise partnerships. [28784]

Robert Neill: As set out in the "Local Growth" White Paper published on 28 October, the Government wish to encourage co-operation between local enterprise partnerships where this would result in a more efficient use of resources and secure a better outcome than operating in isolation. This co-operation need not be restricted to neighbouring partnerships and will be particularly important where partnerships share a common interest, such as the need to support important industrial clusters. The aerospace industry, for example, has important clusters in both the north-west and the south-west of England. The Government will also encourage groups of partnerships which contain key sector clusters to work collaboratively with the relevant national industry bodies. Likewise it will encourage collaboration around particular themes, for example, tourism.

Local Government Finance

Steve Rotheram: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether it is the policy of the Audit Commission that local authorities should hold no more than 5% of their income in reserves. [29042]

Robert Neill: This is an operational matter for the Audit Commission and I have asked the chief executive of the Audit Commission to write to the hon. Member direct.

I also refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 56W.

Letter from Eugene Sullivan, dated 7 December 2010:

Your Parliamentary Question has been passed to me to reply.

The Audit Commission does not have such a policy. It is the responsibility of the individual authority to determine its own policies on reserves, and it would be inappropriate for either the Commission itself, or the independent auditors it appoints, to recommend to a local authority the level of reserves that it should hold.

In addition each authority's chief financial officer (the officer with specific responsibility for financial matters under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972) is required to report if there are concerns about the robustness of the estimates made for the calculations and adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has issued professional guidance on this matter in its Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) Bulletin 77, 'Local Authority Reserves and Balances', which was issued in November 2008.

Under section 5(1)(e) of the Audit Commission Act, auditors have a duty to satisfy themselves that each local authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Auditors are required to do so by reference to criteria specified by the Commission.

For 2010/11, the specified criteria include whether the authority has proper arrangements for securing financial resilience, and so the auditor will consider whether the authority has arrangements for determining its policies on reserves. This will include considering whether the authority has robust financial systems and processes to manage effectively financial risks and opportunities and to secure a stable financial position that enables it to continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

Local Government: Publicity

Graham Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what provision his proposed revision to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity will make in respect of unnecessary expenditure on publicity by local authorities. [27201]

Robert Neill: A principal purpose of the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity is to ensure that local authority publicity is value for money for the taxpayer, and the revisions we are proposing to the code are primarily to ensure that the present wasteful expenditure on lobbyists and local authority newspapers is ended.

These changes will strengthen local democracy by preventing unfair competition to an independent local press, and stopping the corrosive practice of shadowy lobbyists using public funds to lobby for special favours and more regulation.

Tenancy Deposit Schemes

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the tenancy deposit scheme. [27233]

Grant Shapps: Over 2 million deposits worth £1.88 billion are currently protected in one of the three tenancy deposit protection schemes. Although some landlords continue to have reservations, the majority have found access to a free adjudication service under the schemes helpful in resolving disputes. At the same time, tenants welcome the increased security the schemes offer to their money. In view of this, the Government are committed to ensuring that tenancy deposit protection continues in future. In this context, we will be taking steps to put in place new insurance schemes when the existing agreements expire in 2013. The current custodial scheme will be in place to 2016.

Travellers: Caravan Sites

Gavin Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will direct the Planning Inspectorate to take no further action on appeals in relation to Gypsy and Traveller sites until the outcome of the review of his Department's planning circular ODPM 01/2006 is implemented. [29029]

Robert Neill: We want to move expeditiously but subject to proper process in relation to our intention to withdraw circular 01/2006.

The Planning Inspectorate does not routinely place appeals into abeyance because of prospective policy changes. If someone wishes a particular appeal to be placed in abeyance then they should write to the Planning Inspectorate. The Planning Inspectorate will then review the case to see if abeyance is appropriate.

Circular 01/2006 is currently extant but decision makers are entitled to have regard to the fact that it is proposed to withdraw it.

Departmental Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent estimate he has made of the number of questions to his Department tabled in the *(a)* House of Commons and *(b)* House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available. [28493]

Robert Neill: Guidance on the handling of similar questions tabled to more than one Department ("round robin" parliamentary questions) is provided to Departments in a "Guide to Parliamentary Work" on the Cabinet Office website at:

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/parliamentary-clerk-guide.aspx

In the 2010-11 Session, five "round robin" questions tabled in the House of Commons to my Department have been answered after 10 working days. There have been no such cases in the House of Lords.

JUSTICE

Arrest Warrants

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will place in the Library a copy of the comments received from *(a)* individuals, *(b)* organisations and *(c)* foreign Governments on his Department's note of 20 March 2010 on arrest warrants—universal jurisdiction. [28340]

Mr Blunt: Copies of the paper "Arrest warrants—universal jurisdiction" and comments on it have been placed in the Library.

Assisted Prison Visits Unit

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what expenditure his Department incurred on the Assisted Prison Visits Unit in each of the last five years. [28943]

Mr Blunt: Expenditure on assisted prison visits for each of the last five years is shown in the following table.

£

	APVS	*Administration costs*
2009-10	2,343,132	673,424
2008-09	2,171,000	710,000
2007-08	2,170,000	693,000
2006-07	1,941,000	697,000
2005-06	1,973,000	680,000

The Assisted Prison Visits Unit comprises the Assisted Prison Visits scheme (APVS), the NOMS Prisoner Location Service (PLS) and the NOMS Victim helpline (VH).

Association of British Insurers

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) on what dates *(a)* he, *(b)* Ministers and *(c)* officials in his Department have had discussions with representatives of the Association of British Insurers since his appointment; [28967]

(2) what representations on civil justice issues he has received from the Association of British Insurers since his appointment *(a)* prior to and *(b)* since the publication of the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [28968]

Mr Djanogly: I met with representatives of the Association of British Insurers (ABI) on 29 July. My officials have held various discussions with the ABI as with other parties representing claimant and defendant interests in order to seek data and other information in relation to the consultation "Proposals for Reform of Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", published on 15 November 2010.

Civil Proceedings: Legal Costs

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what estimate he has made of the *(a)* total and *(b)* average annual amount that claimants who do not have to contribute towards the costs of their claims would have to contribute following implementation of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28879]

(2) what estimate he has made of the annual number of claimants who do not have to contribute towards the costs of their claims and would have to do so as the consequence of implementation of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; and what estimate he has made of the number of such claimants who would consequently be deterred from bringing claims; [28880]

(3) what estimate he has made of the annual number of clinical negligence cases dealt with under *(a)* fast-track and *(b)* multi-track procedures which qualified for funding through legal aid under existing criteria in the last 12 months which would not so qualify under the proposals in the Legal Aid Green Paper; [28949]

(4) what assessment he has made of the likely effect on provision of legal advice for *(a)* clinical negligence, *(b)* personal injury cases and *(c)* small business disputes of the proposals in (i) the Legal Aid Green Paper and (ii) the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28970]

(5) with reference to the impact assessment on the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper, what estimate he has made of the likely monetary benefit to the liability insurance industry arising from reduced *(a)* costs and *(b)* damages payments attributable to implementation of the Green Paper proposals; [28974]

(6) with reference to the impact assessment for the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper, what estimate he has made of the average change in *(a)* damages awarded to claimants and *(b)* costs claimed by lawyers of claimants; [28975]

(7) what assessment he has made of the consequences for *(a)* the viability of after-the-event insurance and *(b)* the effect on civil litigation of a reduction in the use of after-the-event insurance of implementation of the proposals for qualified one way costs shifting in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28980]

(8) what assessment he has made of the likely effect on levels of premiums for after-the-event insurance if recoverability is limited to liability disputed cases in the post protocol period under the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28981]

(9) what estimate he has made of the likely cost per case to a claimant of obtaining independent legal advice on a damages-based agreement under his proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [29032]

(10) what estimate he has made of the likely cost to the public purse of operating a regulatory system for the damages-based agreements proposed in his Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [29033]

(11) what estimate he has made of the likely average reduction in court costs attributable to the proportionality test proposed in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [29035]

(12) what estimate he has made of the likely monetary value of the uplift of 10% on general damages as proposed in his Department's Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper in respect of an average *(a)* employers' liability and *(b)* road traffic fast-track personal injury claim. [29088]

Mr Djanogly: A set of impact assessments were published alongside both "Proposals for the Reform of Legal Aid in England and Wales" and "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", which include a preliminary assessment of the impact of individual proposals. The preliminary impact assessments can be found at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/consultations.htm

and respondents are invited to comment on the preliminary impacts identified.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what maximum guideline hourly rate he proposes following implementation of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [28881]

Mr Djanogly: Guideline hourly rates are set by the Master of the Rolls taking account of advice received from the Advisory Committee on Civil Costs. I have to date made no assessment of Lord Justice Jackson's recommendations in relation to the setting of guideline hourly rates.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) what estimate he has made of the annual number of claims brought by small businesses against larger suppliers or customers *(a)* under conditional fee agreements and *(b)* supported by after-the-event insurance; [28887]

(2) what estimate he has made of the annual number of claims brought by individual claimants in cases other than those of personal injury *(a)* under conditional fee agreements and *(b)* with the support of after-the-event insurance; [28897]

(3) how much has been recovered through benefit recoupment from personal injury claims *(a)* in total and *(b)* in respect of (i) road traffic accident, (ii) employers (A) disease and (B) other liability cases, (iii) occupiers' liability, (iv) other public liability and (v) clinical negligence cases in each of the last three years; [28927]

(4) what estimate he has made of the change in the level of Exchequer revenue from value added tax receipts consequent on the implementation of the proposals in the *(a)* Legal Aid and *(b)* Civil Litigation Funding Green Papers; [28928]

(5) what estimate he has made of the annual number of occupational disease cases brought under *(a)* fast-track and *(b)* multi-track arrangements and (i) pursued under conditional fee agreements and (ii) covered by after-the-event insurance that will not be brought as a result of implementation of his proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28950]

(6) what estimate he has made of the likely irreducible minimum level of disbursement in a fast-track road traffic accident claim in respect of *(a)* medical evidence, *(b)* police report and *(c)* court fees under the proposals his Department's Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [29089]

(7) whether he has made an estimate of the likely effect on the number of law firms which handle personal injury claims of the implementation of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [29094]

(8) whether he has made an assessment of the likely effects on the legal services provided by *(a)* trade unions and *(b)* membership organisations of the implementation of his proposal to end collective conditional fee agreements; [29095]

(9) how many and what proportion of the cases which resulted in recoupment of benefits were *(a)* funded under conditional fee agreements and *(b)* underwritten by after the event insurance; [29098]

(10) what estimate he has made of the change in revenue accruing to the Department for Work and Pensions from benefit recoupment consequent on the implementation of the proposals in the *(a)* Legal Aid and *(b)* Civil Litigation Funding Green Papers. [29099]

Mr Djanogly: No assessment has been made in relation to the above areas. The preliminary impact assessments for "Proposals for Reform of Legal Aid", and "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales" can be found at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/consultations.htm

and respondents are invited to comment on the preliminary impacts identified.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) if he will estimate the annual number of employer's liability accident cases brought under *(a)* fast-track and *(b)* multi-track arrangements which qualify for (i) conditional fee agreements and (ii) after-the-event insurance support that would not be brought as a result of his proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28951]

(2) if he will estimate the annual number of occupier and public liability accident cases under *(a)* fast-track and *(b)* multi-track arrangements which qualify for (i) conditional fee agreements and (ii) after-the-event insurance support through legal aid that would not be brought as a result of his proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28952]

(3) if he will estimate the annual number of road traffic accident cases under *(a)* fast-track and *(b)* multi-track arrangements which qualify for (i) conditional fee agreements and (ii) after-the-event insurance support through legal aid that would not be brought as a result of his proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28953]

(4) what estimate he has made of the number of cases of injuries of maximum severity pursued under multi-track arrangements supported by after-the-event insurance that will not be brought after implementation of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28954]

(5) if he will estimate the annual number of clinical negligence cases under *(a)* fast-track and *(b)* multi-track arrangements which qualify for (i) conditional fee agreement funding through legal aid and (ii) after-the-event insurance support that would not be brought as a result of his proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [28955]

Mr Djanogly: It is not possible to make a detailed estimate in these areas, as this will depend, in part, on the individual decisions of claimants, defendants, lawyers and insurers on a case-by-case basis. The preliminary impact assessments can be found at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/consultations.htm

and respondents are invited to comment on the preliminary impacts identified.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) what assessment he has made of the likely *(a)* extent, *(b)* availability and *(c)* cost of the (i) stand-alone and (ii) general before-the-event insurance proposed in his Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper to families of (A) average income and (B) below-average income; [28976]

(2) what assessment he has made of the likely restrictions on liability to a policy holder *(a)* generally and *(b)* for legal costs in the before-the-event insurance policies proposed as alternative sources of legal funding in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [28977]

Mr Djanogly: The consultation paper "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations" does not propose any specific action in relation to before the event insurance, other than that the Government support Lord Justice Jackson's encouragement of the expansion of the before the event insurance market. For this reason, no specific assessment has been made.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) what level of means he proposes as that which will entitle *(a)* a claimant to benefit from and *(b)* a defendant to avoid the qualified one way costs shifting proposed in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28978]

(2) at what rate he proposes to fix success fees for each type of case to which such fees will apply. [29092]

Mr Djanogly: The consultation paper, "Proposals for Reform of Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", published on 15 November 2010, sets out proposals on qualified one way costs shifting and conditional fee agreement success fees and we await responses in order to be able to take a view on the way forward on these issues.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how much he expects to recover annually from interest on solicitors' client accounts in *(a)* cash terms and *(b)* as a proportion of the legal aid budget as the consequence of implementation of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [28982]

Mr Djanogly: As stated in the Green Paper, it has not been possible to quantify the level of income such a scheme might generate, as there are no centrally collected data on the sums of money currently held in such accounts in England and Wales.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what discussions he has had with the judiciary on potential changes to the number of litigants-in-person arising from the implementation of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [29034]

Mr Djanogly: The Secretary of State for Justice and I have discussed the proposals in our consultation paper, "Proposals for Reform of Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", published on 15 November 2010, with the senior judiciary on a number of occasions.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of compliance of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper with Articles 6 and 14 of the European convention on human rights on the rights of people with injuries of maximum severity. [29086]

Mr Djanogly: I believe that Lord Justice Jackson's proposals are compatible with the convention rights, and the consultation paper, "Proposals for Reform of Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", published on 15 November 2010, seeks views on potential impacts on claimants in catastrophic injury cases.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what information his Department holds on the evidential basis for the inclusion of the provision for *(a)* recoverability of conditional fee agreement success fees and *(b)* after-the-event insurance premiums in the Access to Justice Act 1999. [29087]

Mr Djanogly: The Department is not aware of any such information other than is already in the public domain.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether he has had discussions with after-the-event insurers on the financial liability of the proposal in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper for recovery of after-the-event premiums for disbursements. [29090]

Mr Djanogly: I held a roundtable on 2 December 2010 with relevant parties representing claimant and defendant interests on our consultation paper, "Proposals for Reform of Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", published on 15 November 2010, including two representatives of after-the-event insurers. My officials held a number of meetings over the summer with 14 representatives of after-the-event insurers in order to seek data and other information in relation to the consultation.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what estimate he has made of the effect on the level of access to justice of the implementation of *(a)* conditional fee agreement and *(b)* after-the-event insurance policies under the Access to Justice Act 1999. [29091]

Mr Djanogly: The Government's assessment of the effect of the CFA reforms introduced by the Access to Justice Act 1999 is set out in the consultation paper "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations". Preliminary impact assessments were published alongside the consultation paper; they can be found at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/consultations.htm

and respondents are invited to comment on the preliminary impacts indentified.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what recent research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the extent of the use of (i) conditional fee agreements and (ii) after-the-event insurance prior to the implementation of the Access to Justice Act 1999. [29093]

Mr Djanogly: None.

Community Orders

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of community payback sentences in each probation board area was completed in each of the last five years. [29115]

Mr Blunt: Community payback completion rates have been part of the formal suite of performance indicators and management information for NOMS since April 2007. The figures for each probation board for the three years 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 are set out in the following table.

Percentage of community payback requirements which were successfully completed

Percentage

Probation board	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Avon and Somerset	62	64	69
Bedfordshire	72	75	71
Cambridgeshire	66	69	76
Cheshire	69	72	78
County Durham	71	71	77
Cumbria	69	73	75
Derbyshire	72	73	73
Devon and Cornwall	70	78	76
Dorset	73	75	81
Dyfed-Powys	73	74	80
Essex	75	75	77
Gloucestershire	73	77	87
Greater Manchester	62	66	73
Gwent	61	66	73
Hampshire	73	76	78
Hertfordshire	76	71	74
Humberside	66	71	72
Kent	63	73	76
Lancashire	62	67	73
Leicestershire	80	74	76
Lincolnshire	65	64	71
London	70	71	72
Merseyside	67	83	76
Norfolk	62	70	75
North Wales	78	79	84
North Yorkshire	75	79	84
Northamptonshire	82	78	78
Northumbria	62	75	82
Nottinghamshire	68	72	77
South Wales	72	72	72
South Yorkshire	66	69	74
Staffordshire	68	75	76
Suffolk	68	72	69
Surrey	78	77	78
Sussex	68	76	79
Teesside	72	70	74
Thames Valley	67	70	70
Warwickshire	71	72	74
West Mercia	76	73	75
West Midlands	69	69	69
West Yorkshire	63	70	79
Wiltshire	64	67	74
England and Wales	68	72	74

Data Sources and Quality

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing

Convictions

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) how many people received a guilty verdict in court in *(a)* 1999 and *(b)* 2009; [28933]

(2) how many people were found guilty in court of an indictable offence in *(a)* 1999 and *(b)* 2009. [28934]

Mr Blunt: The number of persons found guilty at all courts for all offences, and indictable offences, in England and Wales in 1999 and 2009 can be viewed in the following table.

Number of persons found guilty at all courts for all offences and indictable offences, England and Wales, 1999 and 2009

	1999	*2009*
All offences	1,398,271	1,398,874
Of which		
Indictable offences	340,656	328,217

[1] The figures given in the table relate to persons for which these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[2] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

Source:

Justice Statistics Analytical Services—Ministry of Justice

Coroners: Suicide

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will assess the effect on the recording of statistics on the incidence of suicide of trends in the recording of open verdicts in coroners' inquests in each of the last 10 years. [28334]

Mr Djanogly: The Ministry of Justice publishes annual statistics on the work of coroners in England and Wales, including inquest verdicts returned by coroners during each year.

Figures for the latest published period, 2009, show that both suicide and open verdicts have fallen in number and prevalence since 2000. Open verdicts returned by coroners in England and Wales have fallen from 2,449 in 2000 (constituting 11% of all verdicts returned during the year) to 2,240 in 2009 (8% of verdicts returned). Suicide verdicts have fallen from 3,626 in 2000 (16% of verdicts) to 3,300 in 2009 (11% of verdicts). The following table below shows the complete figures for 2000 till the latest published figures in 2009 for both open and suicide verdicts.

Table 1: Coroner verdicts in England and Wales, 2000-09

	Suicide	*Open verdicts*	*Total verdicts returned*
2000	3,626	2,449	23,088
2001	3,389	2,519	23,617
2002	3,242	2,445	23,423
2003	3,255	2,619	24,259
2004	3,368	2,600	25,494
2005	3,235	2,531	26,814
2006	3,220	2,378	27,547
2007	3,007	2,242	27,360
2008	3,305	2,167	28,996
2009	3,330	2,240	29,781

These statistics are available from the Ministry of Justice website at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/coronersannual.htm

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes annual statistics on incidences of suicides in England and Wales based on death registration data. These show a fall in the number of suicides over the last 10 years, from 5,069 in 2000 to 4,675 in 2009. Suicide figures are reported by ONS according to the National Statistics definition, which includes deaths where the underlying cause was intentional self-harm or an event of undetermined intent (open verdicts). They do not include children aged under 15 years.

Courts

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what estimate he has made of the annual number of *(a)* (i) trials and (ii) pre-trial hearings which can be held and *(b)* proceedings which can be issued by county courts (A) at present and (B) under his proposals for the future number and location of such courts. [28900]

Mr Djanogly: HM Courts Service data indicate that in the county courts of England and Wales in 2009-10 there were:

20,514 trials;

7,963 pre-trial reviews;

47,621 small claim hearings; and

5,817 small claim preliminary hearings.

Closures of county courts under the Government's current proposals are not expected to affect the number of trials that can be held or proceedings that can be issued in those courts. The average number of sitting days per courtroom in the county courts was 130 in 2009-10. If all the proposed closures went ahead and workload transferred to surrounding courts, it is estimated that it would result in an average number of sitting days per courtroom per annum of around 200.

This essentially should mean that a similar amount of work as is dealt with currently will be heard at fewer courts, not that the number of trials that can be held or proceedings that can be issued will rise or fall.

Ministry of Justice publishes both annual and quarterly statistics on the numbers of trials and small claim hearings. These statistical bulletins are available from the Ministry of Justice website at:

www.justice.gov.uk/publications/judicialandcourtstatistics.htm

www.justice.gov.uk/publications/courtstatisticsquarterly.htm

Courts: Skipton

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what timetable has been set for his Department's announcement on the future of Skipton magistrates court and Skipton county court. [28612]

Mr Djanogly: I refer the hon. Member to my answer to him of 11 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 137W.

Crime: Finance

Mr Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will hold discussions with *(a)* the National Association of Probation Officers and *(b)* the Police Federation on the effects of budget restraint on the criminal justice system; what representations he has received from each such organisation on funding and criminal justice in the last six months; and if he will make a statement. [28337]

Mr Blunt: As Minister with responsibility for probation I meet with senior officials of the National Association of Probation Officers (NAPO) on a quarterly basis to discuss issues of mutual interest, including the effects of budget restraint on the criminal justice system. I also attended NAPO's Annual General Meeting on 8 October 2010 where funding and resources were discussed. In his role as the Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice, my right hon. Friend the Member for Arundel and South Downs (Nick Herbert), has regular meetings with the Police Federation at which matters of concern to either party can be raised.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28361]

Mr Djanogly: On 24 September the Ministry of Justice issued an instruction to all staff stating that:

One day seminars and conferences are only permitted on the basis of a strong business case and after exploring ways in which the information gained can be obtained in a different way.

In addition, the use of outside venues is now only permitted where no other facilities are available and where costs can be minimised.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working within his private office in each of the last five years. [28561]

Mr Kenneth Clarke: The overtime costs for staff working in the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor's private office for the last five years are:

	Overtime (£)
2005-6	119,893
2006-7	114,069
2007-8	144,387
2008-9	179,337
2009-10	125,867

The MoJ was created in 2007 from the former Department for Constitutional Affairs and part of the Home Office. The role of private office therefore expanded to include new policy areas and functions.

In July 2010, overtime was abolished for all private office staff. The overtime costs for 2010-11 (April-July) were £47,478.

Departmental Sponsorship

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what expenditure *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [27523]

Mr Kenneth Clarke: The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) was formed in May 2007 from the former Department for Constitutional Affairs and part of the Home Office. The figures provided are from the inception of the MoJ.

We have interpreted "sponsorship" as being grants given to external non-government organisations by the Ministry of Justice and its NDPBs. The following is a breakdown of the core Department, agencies and NDPBs who have awarded grants since the MoJ's inception.

Organisation	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
MoJ HQ	£3 billion[1]	£3 billion[1]	£81 million[2]
NOMS	[3]	£4,550,000	£4,500,000
Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority	£0	£1,217	£120
Youth Justice Board	£100 million	£109 million	£118 million
Legal Services Commission	[4]	£3 million	£7 million
Total	£3.1 billion	£3.1 billion	£110 million

[1] MoJ HQ's data are from the published resource accounts. Its grants total includes the grant in aid to its NDPBs and other arm's-length bodies. From 2009-10 this is recorded separately in the resource accounts which explains the apparent drop in grants expenditure.

[2] Approximately half of this went to Victim Support. The rest was given to organisations who support survivors of domestic assault, sexual abuse and rape. Other organisations receiving grants work to reduce crime, support those affected by crime, mediation services and debt advice.

[3] Data not available (with the Home Office).

[4] No comparable data available.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28850]

Mr Djanogly: The MoJ accounting system does not account for travel at that level of detail.

All non-rail travel is accounted for in an overall travel accounting code. This includes public transport (buses, trams etc.) and authorised taxi expenditure as well as mileage. In order to determine how much MoJ had spent on grey fleet[1] we would have to examine each transaction to determine if it was a grey fleet expense. This would exceed the disproportionate cost limit.

The MoJ has introduced an iExpenses system that is currently being rolled out across the Department. We anticipate that this will give us more detailed data from financial year 2011-12 onwards.

[1] Mileage claimed back by staff using their own cars for business.

Legal Costs

Simon Hart: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the financial effects on the justice system of litigants who do not qualify for legal aid and do not have the financial means to engage professional representation of appearing in person. [28735]

Mr Djanogly: Current evidence of the impact of litigants in person on the justice system is limited. We are currently reviewing the existing data and research to inform the final impact assessments that will support the reforms to legal aid on which we are currently consulting. While the thrust of these reforms is to reduce recourse to the courts, we recognise that they will also potentially lead to an increase in litigants in person. We consider that the overall effect should not significantly impact on court or tribunal operating costs. There will be a post-implementation review of any reforms.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) if he will publish the *(a)* agenda, *(b)* minutes and *(c)* notes of each meeting he held to consult on the proposals in the Legal Aid Green Paper and the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [28878]

(2) what consultation meetings he *(a)* has held and *(b)* proposes to hold on the Legal Aid Green Paper and the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; who (i)

was invited to and (ii) attended the meetings already held; and who is to be invited to such meetings yet to be held. [28904]

Mr Djanogly: I have met with a number of interested parties to discuss the legal aid and civil litigation funding consultations. My officials and I will continue to engage with relevant groups throughout the consultation period. As the consultation is ongoing it would not be appropriate to publish information related to these meetings until all parties have had the opportunity to contribute their views. In line with the Code of Practice on Consultation, a summary of the comments received for each consultation will be published alongside the Government's official response, which is expected in spring 2011.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice when he plans to publish the outcome of his consultations on *(a)* the Legal Aid Green Paper and *(b)* the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [28885]

Mr Djanogly: Both consultations will close on 14 February 2011, and the Government's responses are due to be published in spring 2011.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) what steps he plans to take to introduce fast-track fixed costs; [28892]

(2) how the level of fixed costs in the fast track will be set under his proposals; by whom; and at what point; [28893]

(3) when he expects to issue his proposed consultation on fixed recoverable costs in the fast track; [28971]

(4) when he expects to issue his proposed consultation on wider civil justice reform. [28972]

Mr Djanogly: The question of whether costs should be fixed in the fast track and other proposed reforms of civil justice will be subject to public consultation which will take place in the spring of 2011.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what change he expects to *(a)* litigation costs to and *(b)* damages payable by Government Departments and agencies to personal injury claimants as a consequence of implementation of the proposals in the Legal Aid Green Paper and the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [28898]

Mr Djanogly: In relation to proposals for reform of legal aid, no assessment has been made in relation to the above areas. In relation to "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales): Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", data are not available to make preliminary estimates of impact in the majority of cases, though a preliminary estimate has been made as to the impact on the NHS Litigation Authority. The preliminary impact assessments can be found at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/consultations.htm:

and respondents are invited to comment on the preliminary impacts identified.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice when he expects the result of the Legal Services Board's consultation on referral fees to be published. [28899]

Mr Djanogly: The Legal Services Board (LSB) issued a discussion paper, "Referral fees, referral arrangements and fee sharing" on 29 September 2010. Contributions are expected by Wednesday 22 December and the LSB expects to publish its conclusions in spring 2011.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice when he expects to *(a)* receive and *(b)* publish an assessment of his Department's costs pilot in county courts in Yorkshire. [28973]

Mr Djanogly: A system of provisional costs assessment for bills of costs up to £25,000 is being piloted in Leeds, York and Scarborough county courts from 1 October 2010 for one year. The pilot is being monitored by officials. A decision will be made on whether to extend the process more generally in the light of the outcomes from the pilot. There are no plans to publish an assessment of the pilot.

Negligence: NHS

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many *(a)* fast-track and *(b)* multi-track cases of clinical negligence funded through legal aid have been brought in each of the last three years. [29019]

Mr Djanogly: The Legal Services Commission does not record fast-track and multi-track clinical negligence cases separately.

The following table shows the number of legally aided clinical negligence cases which were started in the last three financial years. The figures are broken down by the form of legal aid provided: legal help (initial advice and assistance); and legal representation in court proceedings.

	2007-08	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Legal help	3,832	3,597	4,024
Legal representation	3,868	3,883	3,446
Total	7,700	7,480	7,470

Offenders

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many offences were committed by offenders out on licence or probation for another offence in each police force area in each of the last five years. [28057]

Mr Blunt: The Ministry of Justice publishes local reoffending data for all offenders on the probation caseload (which includes offenders out on licence and those with court orders). These data are produced at the Probation Area level, which before 1 April 2010 were coterminous with police force boundaries (London Probation includes both the Metropolitan police force and the City of London force, and Teesside Probation Area covered the same boundary as Cleveland police force). These data measure the reoffending of all offenders under probation supervision over a period of three months. The results are produced by aggregating four quarters of data.

The following table shows the number of re-offences committed by offenders on the probation caseload. Each period shown is based on the offenders on the probation caseload at the end of March, June, September and December of each year. Data are not available prior to 2007.

On 1 April 2010, Probation Trusts were established following a rigorous formal application process, resulting in all 42 former Probation Boards being replaced by 35 Probation Trusts. The table presented here is based on data prior to this date.

Number of re-offences committed during the time period shown, by offenders on the probation caseload in 2007-09, by Probation Area

	Re-offending period covered 1 April to 31 March each year		
Probation area	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Avon and Somerset	2,625	2,867	3,017
Bedfordshire	921	905	1,022
Cambridgeshire	1,742	1,894	1,718
Cheshire	1,750	1,780	1,870
Teesside	3,621	3,755	3,755
Cumbria	1,517	1,544	1,358
Derbyshire	1,474	1,738	1,677
Devon and Cornwall	1,928	1,943	1,833
Dorset	1,070	1,150	990
Durham	2,160	2,237	2,037
Essex	3,087	2,879	2,966
Gloucestershire	1,008	1,409	1,139
Hampshire	3,485	3,821	3,923
West Mercia	2,091	2,126	1,982
Hertfordshire	1,370	1,698	1,710
Humberside	2,342	2,344	2,283
Kent	2,278	2,455	2,780
Lancashire	4,484	4,763	4,524
Leicestershire	1,718	1,620	1,425
Lincolnshire	1,150	1,017	1,087
Greater Manchester	8,600	8,661	7,033
Merseyside	4,225	4,520	3,934
Norfolk	1,558	1,417	1,355
Northamptonshire	1,087	1,117	1,112
Northumbria	6,549	6,805	6,317
Nottinghamshire	3,483	2,887	2,871
Thames Valley	3,230	3,569	2,905
Staffordshire	2,203	1,953	1,652
Suffolk	1,081	1,026	1,381
Surrey	1,003	944	1,039
Sussex	2,349	1,811	2,176
Warwickshire	994	1,064	957
West Midlands	8,727	8,258	6,749
Wiltshire	794	995	960
North Yorkshire	1,514	1,629	1,474
South Yorkshire	3,942	3,496	3,216
West Yorkshire	6,220	6,501	5,999
Dyfed-Powys	947	905	976
Gwent	1,781	1,626	1,654
North Wales	1,690	1,916	1,923
South Wales	4,278	4,545	4,225
London	16,779	16,704	15,930

Personal Injury

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) what estimate he has made of the average annual number and proportion of viable personal injury claims that are not pursued through the courts; [28886]

(2) how many personal injury cases were settled *(a)* after proceedings were commenced and *(b)* after a defence was served denying liability in each of the last three years; [28894]

(3) in how many personal injury cases did a claimant *(a)* beat and *(b)* fail to beat a Part 36 offer in each of the last three years; [28895]

(4) how many personal injury cases proceeded to a trial in which the claimant was *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful in each of the last three years. [28896]

Mr Djanogly: The Ministry of Justice holds statistical information in relation to the numbers of claims issued, defences made and trials in cases for an unspecified amount of money in the county courts of England and Wales. The following table shows these figures for each year between 2007 and 2009.

The Ministry of Justice does not hold figures centrally which specifically relate to personal injury claims, settlements, Part 36 offers, or trials. This is because personal injury cases, while logged on to the administrative computer systems used in the county courts, cannot be distinguished from other types of cases brought for an unspecified amount of money.

Summary statistics on cases issued for an unspecified amount of money in England and Wales, 2007-09

	Claims issued	*Defences*	*Trials*
2007	144,128	97,138	12,750
2008	160,248	102709	14,018
2009	178,969	116,662	14,662

Source:
HM Courts Service CaseMan system

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the merits of increasing the level of use of mediation at an early stage in personal injury claims. [29096]

Mr Djanogly: Proposals to extend the use of mediation in personal injury claims and other civil claims will be part of a public consultation which will be conducted in the spring of 2011.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will assess the merits of reversing the burden of proof in personal injury cases *(a)* generally and *(b)* in respect of each type of case for the purpose of (i) reducing litigation costs and (ii) speeding up claims. [29097]

Mr Djanogly: We have no plans to reverse the burden of proof in personal injury cases.

Personal Injury: Damages

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what progress he has made in developing his proposed pilot for predictable personal injury damages in claims up to £10,000. [28979]

Mr Djanogly: As stated at paragraphs 271-2 of the consultation paper, "Proposals for reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", the Civil Justice Council is considering this issue. It will determine in due course whether it is a project which can be completed, to the timetable indicated, and whether it is in a position to take this project forward.

Police Custody: Mental Health Services

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what progress has been made in implementing the recommendations of Lord Bradley's review of people with mental health problems or learning disabilities in the criminal justice system to ensure that every police custody suite has access to a criminal justice mental health team. [29076]

Mr Blunt: The Ministry of Justice is working with the Department of Health and the Home Office to ensure frontline criminal justice and health agencies focus on identifying those people with mental health problems at an early stage of the criminal justice pathway. The aim is to ensure liaison and diversion services are available in police custody suites and at courts by 2014.

Prison Governors

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the average tenure of a prison governor was in each of the last five years. [29114]

Mr Blunt: Information on the average tenure of a prison governor employed in the National Offender Management Service for each of the last five years is contained in the following table.

Average tenure for a governor in each of the last five years

As at 31 March each year	*Average tenure (years)*
2010	8
2009	8
2008	8
2007	8
2006	8

A "prison governor" has been defined as anyone filling a governor grade post (for example, governing governor, deputy governor, head of residence).

"Average tenure" has been defined as the length of time a member of staff has filled any governor grade post.

Prisoners on Remand

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what percentage of remand prisoners had no visits from family members in the last year for which figures are available. [28938]

Mr Blunt: Information on the number of unconvicted prisoners who have received no social visits from family is not centrally collated. The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) policy on visits requires prisons to offer remand prisoners three social visits each week lasting at least one hour.

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what *(a)* financial and *(b)* practical help remand prisoners released without conviction receive from his Department upon release. [28939]

Mr Blunt: The imprisonment of unconvicted prisoners should not deprive them of any of their normal rights and freedom as citizens, except where this is an inevitable consequence of imprisonment.

Remand prisoners may make transactions necessary to maintain their financial affairs and are granted a higher private cash allowance. Although remand prisoners are not entitled to a discharge grant, any case of financial hardship must be referred to the local Jobcentre Plus office.

During their time in custody, remand prisoners are able to access a range of services including education and careers advice, and pre-release support with employment, benefits and accommodation. They may also for example send and receive as many letters as they wish.

Prisoners' Release

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of prisoners released in each of the last five years entered education, training or employment. [29106]

Mr Blunt: The information requested is set out in the following table in relation to 2007-08 and 2008-09.

2007-08 was the first year for which outcomes were reported as a proportion of discharges.

Figures for 2009-10 are undergoing final validation and will be published on the Ministry of Justice website in the near future.

	Percentage of offenders entering employment on discharge	*Percentage of offenders entering education and training on discharge*
2007-08	27.0	10.7
2008-09	26.0	11.7

Data Sources and Quality:

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of prisoners received accommodation guidance before their release in the latest year for which figures are available. [29107]

Mr Blunt: In 2008-09, over 90% of offenders entering custody had an initial housing needs assessment within the first four days following reception. This is to enable the safeguarding, transfer or closure of existing accommodation, and to signpost further housing assistance in preparation for release.

In addition, 89% of prisoners in 2009-10 reported they were going into settled or suitable accommodation on release. The recent establishment of the cross-Government ministerial group on homelessness is expected to consider what further action is needed to support housing provision for offenders.

Prisoners' Transfers: Costs

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the average cost was of a prison transfer in the last year for which figures are available. [28932]

Mr Blunt: In the financial year 2009-10, the average cost of transferring prisoners, using the inter-prison transfer contract was £98.16. In total 82,521 prisoners were transferred within that period.

Prisoners: Basic Skills

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of prisoners classified as *(a)* illiterate and *(b)* innumerate in each of the last five years enrolled on basic skills courses. [29113]

Mr Blunt: There is no commonly accepted definition of illiteracy or innumeracy and individual level data is not collected centrally that would allow analysis of learners' prior achievement against their engagement in learning.

However, the following information[1] is available:

Table 1 includes basic skills key performance target data for the academic years 2004-05 and 2005-06.

Data sources and quality:

[1] These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Academic year (August to July)	*English for speakers of other languages ESOL*	*Literacy*	*Numeracy*	*Total*
2004-05	1282	30351	31698	63331
2005-06	1453	22380	22171	46004

Table 2 as follows includes data provided by the Skills Funding Agency[1] relating to literacy and numeracy learning aims from individual learner records (ILR) for the academic years 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09. Data for 2009-10 is not yet available. It should be noted that this table shows the number of learning aim enrolments in a year rather then individual learners, as learners may enrol on more than one literacy or numeracy course in a year.

[1] Formally the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) responsible for planning and funding learning and skills delivery for learners in public sector prisons and young offenders' institutions in England, from August 2006 through the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS). It excludes private prisons, prisons in Wales and Immigration Removal Centres.

	Literacy aim[1] enrolments				*Numeracy[1] aim enrolments*					
Academic year (August to July)	*Entry level*	*Level 1*	*Level 2*	*Total*	*Entry level*	*Level 1*	*Level 2*	*Total*	*Total Literacy and Numeracy aim enrolments*	*Total enrolments[2]*
2006-07[3]	13480	17736	9545	40761	13322	13330	6938	33590	74351	240045
2007-08	17174	20560	12613	50347	16482	16152	9669	[4]42314	92661	299300
2008-09	13787	16018	10083	39888	12990	13504	8310	34804	74692	243182

[1] Learning aim is a generic term which includes qualifications, courses and learning events under a general title.
[2] Including Literacy and Numeracy aim enrolments.
[3] The Individual Learner Record data for 2006-07 may include a small amount of enrolments by those who are serving their sentence in the community.
[4] Total includes 11 with no specific level.

Prisoners: Children

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what percentage of prisoners' children are recorded by the Prison-NOMIS Case Management System. [28940]

Mr Blunt: Prison-NOMIS holds information on the number of children of prisoners. The field is not mandatory so data cannot be validated, however currently the system shows 60.5% of prisoners have provided information on how many children they have.

Prisoners: Location

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many prisoners are held *(a)* up to and *(b)* more than 50 miles from their normal place of residence. [28941]

Mr Blunt: Information on a prisoner's residence is provided by prisoners on reception into prison and recorded on a central IT system. Addresses include a prisoner's home address, an address to which they intend to return on discharge and next of kin. To analyse the population as a whole, if no address is given, a prisoner's committal court address is used as a proxy to determine the area in which a prisoner is resident. This is required for about 40% of the population and these figures are included in the answer. No address has been recorded and no court information is available for around 3% of prisoners and these figures are excluded from the answer.

The following table shows the number of prisoners as at 24 September 2010 who are held up to and over 50 miles from either a recorded residential address or proxy, as described above.

	Up to 50 miles	*Over 50 miles*
Recorded address	29,253	19,574
Proxy address	22,973	10,722
Total	52,226	30,296

These figures include male and female prisoners, adults, young offenders and juveniles and those who are sentenced and on remand.

Prisons: Sanitation

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many prison places lacked in-cell sanitation or open access to toilet facilities in each of the last five years. [29074]

Mr Blunt: The following table shows the number of prison places without in-cell sanitation or open access to toilet facilities since 2005.

The number of prison places without in-cell sanitation or open access to toilet facilities since 2005

	Number of places
2005	2,127
2006	2,127
2007	2,127
2008	2,117
2009	2,117
2010	1,973

These figures reflect the number of places without in-cell sanitation as at 1 March each year.

Currently less than 3% of the prison population does not have access to in-cell sanitation.

Investigations continue into prisons where it could be possible to replace electronic unlocking with in-cell sanitation as part of the prison estate refurbishment programme. All new prisons are built with in-cell sanitation installed.

Prisons: Visits

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many prisons have held children and family days in each of the last five years. [28942]

Mr Blunt: To answer the question in the form requested would entail disproportionate cost as it would involve contacting over 130 prison establishments which would all need to check individual records.

However a sample of responses has demonstrated that the significant majority of establishments hold family days, or dedicated events where children and families attend. A number of establishments have held family days in the majority of the last five years, some have introduced them within the last five years, and small minority of establishments have not held any family days.

Remand in Custody: Young People

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what percentage of children in custody at year end were on remand in each of the last five years. [28935]

Mr Blunt: The following table shows the percentage of young people under 18 in custody who were on remand at the end of December in each of the last five years for which data are available.

As at December each year	*Percentage of under-18 custodial population on remand*
2004	19.5
2005	22.2
2006	21.2
2007	21.1
2008	21.1

Note:

The figures have been provided by the Youth Justice Board and have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and may be subject to change over time.

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what percentage of children on remand were remanded to *(a)* custody and *(b)* non-secure local authority accommodation in each of the last five years. [28937]

Mr Blunt: The Youth Justice Board collects data on the number of remand episodes that took place for children and young people aged 10 to 17 by courts in England and Wales. A remand episode is the initial remand decision made in court, regardless of how many times a child or young person appears in court. A remand episode will cover all secure and non secure remands, plus remands to the community i.e. bail. The number and percentage of remands to custody and local authority accommodation is shown in the following table. These figures have been provided by the Youth Justice Board and have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and may be subject to change over time.

	2004-05		*2005-06*		*2006-07*		*2007-08*		*2008-09*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Total remand episodes	128,875	n/a	111,168	n/a	102,815	n/a	86,108	n/a	71,359	n/a
Total custodial remands *(a)*	6,969	5	6,561	6	6,360	6	5,663	7	5,504	8
Remands to local authority accommodation *(b)*	1,957	2	1,655	1	1,493	1	1,292	2	1,052	1

Repossession Orders: Landlords

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether his Department has plans to increase access to justice for landlords in repossession cases. [28430]

Mr Djanogly: The coalition agreement commits the Government to ensure that repossession is always the last resort. Where there is no alternative to repossession there are procedures in place to enable landlords to regain possession of their property.

The accelerated possession procedure allows the landlord to bring a claim solely for possession of the property. This is a fast track procedure under which the court will make its decision on the papers, and can order possession to be given up within 14 days unless exceptional hardship would be caused, in which case the maximum time that can be allowed is 42 days.

The Ministry of Justice has no plans to make changes to this procedure relating to possession cases.

Roads: Accidents

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) what proportion of personal injury claims are low-value road traffic cases qualifying for the new portal system; [28888]

(2) how many cases have been *(a)* accepted into and *(b)* disposed of through the low-value road traffic cases portal system since its inception; [28889]

(3) how many cases have not been proceeded with under the low-value road traffic cases portal system owing to the failure of a defendant to comply with its terms; [28890]

(4) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the low-value road traffic cases portal system. [28891]

Mr Djanogly: The Department has put in place evaluation criteria for the low value road traffic accident personal injury process and is now awaiting data from the industry which they will extract from the IT portal.

Young Offender Institutions: Sanitation

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of those in custody at young offender institutions do not have access to a shower or other washing facilities each day. [29116]

Mr Blunt: Information received from Young Offender Institutions shows that all young offenders have daily access to washing facilities.

Young Offenders

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what percentage of persons under 18 years of age in custody *(a)* had no visits from family members and *(b)* were in custody more than 50 miles from their normal place of residence in the last year for which figures are available. [28947]

Mr Blunt: The Youth Justice Board places young people in custody according to their needs and how those needs can best be managed. Distance from home is just one of a range of factors considered including age, gender, individual needs and the availability of a suitable establishment.

The monthly average percentage of young people under 18 in custody held 50 miles or more away from their normal place of residence for 2008-09 was 32.8%. Records with invalid or missing postcodes have not been included within this data. The figures have been provided by the Youth Justice Board and have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and may be subject to change over time.

Young people that are placed into secure accommodation have the right and are encouraged to maintain approved contact with family members, friends or other individuals. Data on the number of family visits per young person under 18 in custody are not held centrally by the Youth Justice Board.

Young Offenders: Physical Education

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what estimate he has made of the average number of hours per week spent on physical education by offenders in young offender institutions in each of the last five years. [29112]

Mr Blunt: The information requested is set out in the following table.

	Average hours of physical education per prisoner per week
2005-06	3.40
2006-07	3.39
2007-08	3.42
2008-09	3.54
2009-10	3.81

Note:

The figures in the answer are for prisons with the main function of holding young adults aged 18-20 years and young people aged 15-17. It is not possible to disaggregate data for adult prisons which hold a small element of young offender population.

Data Sources and Quality:

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Young Offenders: Sentencing

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of persons under 18 years of age convicted for a first offence received a custodial sentence in each of the last five years. [28945]

Mr Blunt: The following table shows figures for juvenile offenders receiving their first immediate custodial sentence, as recorded on the police national computer. These figures have been derived from supplementary table 6e of "Sentencing Statistics: England and Wales 2009" which was published on 21 October 2010.

Juvenile offenders receiving an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence, with no previous cautions or convictions, 2005-09, England and Wales

	Number and percentage of offenders				
	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
All juvenile first time offenders receiving a sentence	6,137	5,775	5,659	5,162	4,922
Juvenile first time offenders sentenced to immediate custody	349	358	386	399	349
Percentage of juvenile first time offenders sentenced to immediate custody	5.7	6.2	6.8	7.7	7.1

The figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system, the police national computer, which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police.

Youth Custody

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many persons under 18 years of age were held in custody in *(a)* young offender institutions, *(b)* secure training centres and *(c)* secure children's homes at year end in each of the last five years. [28944]

Mr Blunt: The following table shows the number of young people under 18 held in young offender institutions, secure training centres and secure children's homes at the end of December in each of the last five years for which data are available.

	As at December each year				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Young Offender Institutions	2,191	2,210	2,317	2,332	2,327
Secure Training Centres	207	215	255	242	215
Secure Children's Homes	219	219	224	221	173
Total	2,617	2,644	2,796	2,795	2,715

The figures have been provided by the Youth Justice Board and have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and may be subject to change over time.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Civil Society Challenge Fund

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has provided to the Civil Society Challenge Fund in each of the last 10 years. [28600]

Mr O'Brien: Details of funding from the Department for International Development (DFID) through the Civil Society Challenge Fund (CSCF) are published in "Statistics on International Development", which is available in the Library of the House and on the DFID website. Funding provided in each financial year since 2001-02 is as follows. Information cannot be provided for 2000-01 without incurring disproportionate cost.

Financial year	*Amount (£000)*
2001-02	7,069
2002-03	8,902
2003-04	8,727
2004-05	10,106
2005-06	13,260
2006-07	13,539
2007-08	14,688
2008-09	16,680
2009-10	12,232

Connections for Development: Finance

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has provided to Connections for Development in each year since 2003. [28601]

Mr Duncan: Funding from the Department for International Development (DFID) to Connections for Development (CfD) ended in March 2009. DFID funding to CfD in each financial year since 2003-04 is as follows. Funding to CfD ended in March 2009.

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
2003-04	86,304
2004-05	125,334
2005-06	326,228
2006-07	250,431
2007-08	249,541
2008-09	214,536

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of its funding for the organisation Connections for Development in contributing to his Department's development objectives. [28602]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) stopped funding Connections for Development in March 2009.

Departmental Grants

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent through strategic grant agreements in each of the last 10 years. [28665]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) provided the following funding through Strategic Grant Agreements (SGAs) from 2002-03 to 2009-10. DFID provided no funding under SGAs prior to 2003-04 and none after April 2009.

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
2002-03	0
2003-04	375,329
2004-05	850,375
2005-06	1,064,514
2006-07	667,380
2007-08	295,276
2008-09	18,477
2009-10	0

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working within his private office in each of the last five years. [28565]

Mr Duncan: Staff in the Secretary of State's private office in posts designated as private secretary or assistant private secretary are paid a fixed private office allowance in lieu of overtime. The rate depends on the designation and grade of the post holder, with rates ranging from £7,500 to £8,500 per annum.

Records on the amount of overtime received by individual staff members are not available prior to 1 November 2008. The total amount paid to staff working in the Secretary of State's private office, other than private and assistant private secretaries, since 1 November 2008 is as follows.

Time period	*Amount (£)*
1 November 2008 to 31 December 2008	3,822.60

Time period	*Amount (£)*
1 January 2009 to 31 December 2009	7,321.00
1 January 2010 to 30 November 2010	9,296.50

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28377]

Mr Duncan: Detailed information on departmental printing costs over this time period cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

For the financial years 2009-10 and 2010-11 central records are held on the printing costs of papers presented to Parliament by Act. Details of these are as following:

	£
2009-10	
DFID Autumn Performance Report	15,535
DFID Annual Resource Accounts	16,794
DFID Annual Report	7,895
2010-11	
DFID Annual Resource Accounts	1,855
DFID Annual Report	2,460
Reprint of Development Act Report	2,044

Departmental Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent estimate he has made of the number of questions to his Department tabled in the *(a)* House of Commons and *(b)* House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar Questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available. [28487]

Mr Duncan: Since 18 May 2010, the Department for International Development (DFID) has answered 96% of House of Commons parliamentary questions (PQs) and 95% of House of Lords PQs within the respective deadlines. Seven House of Commons PQs identified as round robin questions have been answered after 10 working days during the current parliamentary session.

Developing Countries: Debts

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding within the definition of official development assistance has been allocated to the writing-off of the debt owed by heavily indebted poor countries to the Export Credits Guarantee Department in each year from 2011-12 to 2013-14. [28603]

Mr Duncan: Over the spending review period, we expect to provide £25 million to the Export Credits Guarantee Department, for writing off debt owed by heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC). The timing of this expenditure, however, is uncertain as it depends on the progress countries make in meeting the agreed standards.

Developing Countries: Diseases

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with his ministerial colleagues on the risk to the UK from *(a)* transnational agricultural pests and *(b)* diseases originating from developing countries. [28621]

Mr O'Brien: There have been no ministerial level discussions on the risk to the UK from transnational agricultural pests and diseases originating from developing countries.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to reduce the threat posed to smallholder farmers' livelihoods by transnational diseases in developing countries. [28623]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) is a major funder of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), which includes the Nairobi-based International Livestock Research Institute. CGIAR and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation, which we also fund, do excellent work on animal health and production, including research into reducing the transmission of trans-boundary animal diseases. Their work includes that on Avian Influenza, East Coast Fever of cattle and Rinderpest, a disease of cattle which is now close to being officially eradicated.

With regard to trans-national crop diseases, we are co-funding work on improving resistance to wheat stem rust, with the Gates Foundation and the British Biological Science Research Council.

Development Awareness Fund

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has provided to the Development Awareness Fund in each of the last 10 years. [28599]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) provided the following funding through the Development Awareness Fund (DAF) from 2002-03 to 2009-10. Information prior to 2002-03 cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost. The Development Awareness Fund is now closed for new applications and will cease to exist once current grants have ended.

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
2002-03	4,452,341
2003-04	4,197,662
2004-05	4,150,332
2005-06	4,212,567
2006-07	4,244,098
2007-08	3,242,776
2008-09	4,095,825
2009-10	5,353,983

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much from the Development Awareness Fund has been given to trade unions in each of the last 10 years. [28666]

Mr Duncan: Details of funding from the Department for International Development (DFID) to trade unions since 2002-03, through the Development Awareness Fund (DAF), are available in the Library of the House. Information prior to 2002-03 cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost. The Development Awareness Fund is now closed for new applications and will cease to exist once current grants have ended.

DFID is reviewing all of its aid programmes, including aid channelled through trade unions, to ensure that it makes a real difference to the world's poorest people.

Non-governmental Organisations: Finance

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which non-governmental organisations his Department funded through partnership programme arrangements in the latest period for which figures are available; and how much was given to each such organisation. [28598]

Mr O'Brien: Details of funding from the Department for International Development (DFID) to non-government organisations (NGOs) through programme partnership arrangements (PPA) are published in 'Statistics on International Development', which is available in the Library of the House and on the DFID website. Details of funding to NGOs through PPAs in financial year 2009-10 are as follows.

Organisation	*Amount (£000)*
Action on Disability and Development	1,360
ActionAid	5,540
Aga Khan Foundation (UK)	1,025
BOND	360
CAFOD	4,430
CARE International UK	3,950
Christian Aid	7,640
CIVICUS	75
Comic Relief	7,000
Ethical Trading Initiative	755
Helpage International	1,830
International HIV/Aids Alliance	5,380
International Institute for Environment and Development	1,760
International Services UNAIS	1,560
International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)	6,450
Islamic Relief	800
Overseas Development Institute	1,140
One World Action	1,060
OXFAM	11,090
Panos London	1,900
Plan International UK	2,410
Practical Action	1,060
PROGRESSIO	3,470
Save The Children	9,320
Skillshare International	3,508
Transparency International	1,060
Trades Union Congress (TUC)	1,200
VSO	31,660
Wateraid	1,680
World Vision UK	2,620
WWF UK	5,730

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on partnership programme arrangements in each of the last 10 years. [28667]

Mr O'Brien: Details of funding from the Department for International Development (DFID) through programme partnership arrangements (PPA) are published in 'Statistics on International Development', which is available in the Library of the House and on the DFID website. In each of the last 10 financial years DFID has allocated the following amounts through PPAs.

Financial year	*Amount (£000)*
2001-02	53,650
2002-03	57,227
2003-04	59,011
2004-05	65,263
2005-06	82,150
2006-07	89,141
2007-08	89,695
2008-09	108,928
2009-10	128,823

Sudan: Overseas Aid

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding his Department has provided to development projects in Sudan in each of the last five years. [28672]

Mr O'Brien: Details of the Department for International Development's (DFID's) aid expenditure in developing countries are published in 'Statistics on International Development', which is available in the Library of the House and on the DFID website. DFID bilateral programme expenditure and imputed expenditure through multilateral organisations in Sudan from 2005-06 to 2009-10 is as follows.

Financial year	*Total DFID bilateral (£000)*	*DFID imputed multilateral shares (£000)*
2005-06	117,046	39,547
2006-07	109,800	34,398
2007-08	134,666	19,546
2008-09	105,787	15,942
2009-10	145,578	n/a

n/a = not available

Tanzania: Pests

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent reports his Department has received on the threat posed by the recent outbreak of peste des petits ruminants in Tanzania to the livelihood of poorest smallholder farmers in that region. [28622]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has not received any reports on the threat posed by an outbreak of peste des petits ruminants in Tanzania. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) is monitoring a recent outbreak and offering support.

Trade Unions: Finance

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has provided to trade unions in each of the last 10 years. [28668]

Mr O'Brien: Details of funding to trade unions since financial year 2002-03 are available in the Library of the House. Information prior to 2002-03 cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

The Department for International Development (DFID) is reviewing all of its aid programmes, including aid channelled through trade unions, to ensure that it makes a real difference to the world's poorest people.

TREASURY

Child Benefit

Mr Crausby: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the administration costs of implementing the changes to child benefit entitlement announced in the 2010 Spending Review. [28451]

Justine Greening: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer the Exchequer Secretary gave the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South (Bridget Phillipson) on 23 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 265W.

Consumer Protection and Markets Authority

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made in establishing the Consumer Protection and Markets Authority. [28317]

Mr Hoban: The Government published a consultation document in July which included high-level proposals on the creation of a consumer protection and markets authority. The consultation closed in October and a summary of the responses received is available on the Treasury's website at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/summaryofcondocresponses241110.pdf

The Treasury, working with the Financial Services Authority and the Bank of England, will continue to develop these proposals in light of consultation responses and developing policy priorities. A further consultation document setting out detailed policy and legislative proposals will be published by the Treasury in the early part of 2011.

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the budget of the Consumer Protection and Markets Authority during its first full year of operation. [28319]

Mr Hoban: The budgetary process for the consumer protection and markets authority (CPMA) will be based on that of the Financial Services Authority. The CPMA will be independent of Government and therefore responsible for setting its own budget. The CPMA's operations will be funded by a levy raised from all firms it regulates, and the CPMA will consult on the level of its fees.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28106]

Justine Greening: HM Treasury Group recognises the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and third sector organisations to the UK economy and is committed to promoting small business procurement.

HM Treasury has adopted the standard Pre-Qualification Questionnaire, recently introduced by the Efficiency and Reform Group.

HM Treasury Group publish all new tender documents and information and communication technology contracts over £10,000 (excluding VAT) online. From January 2011 these and all new contracts valued £10,000 or more (excluding VAT) can be found on the public sector "Contracts Finder" website, free of charge; contracts awarded to a SME will be highlighted. HM Treasury Group will implement procurement strategies and agree contracts that encourage innovation and exploit the expertise and value that can be obtained from SMEs.

HM Treasury Group aim to pay all valid supplier invoices within five working days.

HM Treasury Group supports the cross-Government package of measures to open up Government procurement opportunities to SMEs launched by the Minister for the Cabinet Office on 1 November 2010. These measures, designed to address the areas that are the biggest barriers to SMEs doing business with the public sector, include:

plans to cut away unnecessary bureaucracy and waste by streamlining the procurement process;

improving the transparency of public procurement opportunities; and

requiring major suppliers to guarantee subcontractors working on Government contracts are paid within 30 days and encouraging them to pass these terms along the supply chain.

Money Laundering: Fees and Charges

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will bring forward proposals to revise the level of fees paid under money laundering regulations to reflect the number of clients of those charged such fees; and if he will make a statement. [28630]

Mr Hoban: The fees charged by money laundering supervisors are a matter for each of the individual supervisors concerned.

The money laundering supervisors are listed in the Money Laundering Regulations 2007.

Personal Savings

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent progress he has made in encouraging individuals to save a higher proportion of their disposable income; and if he will make a statement. [28926]

Mr Hoban: The Government want to build a savings system based on the principles of freedom, fairness and responsibility and are committed to creating conditions for higher saving. The Government have already announced a number of measures, such as the Annual Financial Healthcheck which will be introduced from spring 2011, and an end to the effective requirement to purchase an annuity with tax-relieved pension savings by age 75 from April 2011. The Government will also increase the amount that can be paid into ISAs each year in line with inflation from April 2011, and will shortly publish a consultation on the development of a new category of simple financial products, which will help encourage saving.

Public Bodies: Land

Mr Nicholas Brown: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 11 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 473W, on public assets: land, how often the ownership status of land directly owned by *(a)* Government Departments and their agencies and *(b)* other public bodies is re-evaluated. [27229]

Justine Greening: All land assets should be carried at valuation at the reporting period date in accordance with the accounting standards applied by the Treasury to relevant Government bodies. Revaluation methodologies vary depending on the volatility of the assets' underlying value, so for example, may be carried out on an annual or quinquennial basis as appropriate. Irrespective of the revaluation approach, an entity shall assess at the end of each reporting period whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired below the carrying amount. If any such indication exists, the entity shall estimate the recoverable amount of the asset.

The Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) complements guidance published separately by the relevant authorities in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The treatment of land valuation is broadly aligned with guidance produced for those public bodies that do not apply the FReM directly, namely, local government, public corporations that are not trading funds, NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts.

Taxation: Coppiced Sweet Chestnut

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the *(a)* revenue accruing to the Exchequer from and *(b)* contribution to gross domestic product made by the coppiced sweet chestnut industry in (i) 2007, (ii) 2008 and (iii) 2009. [28429]

Justine Greening: Information on the revenue accruing to the Exchequer from the coppiced sweet chestnut industry in (i) 2007, (ii) 2008 and (iii) 2009 is not available.

Responsibility for assessing gross domestic product rests with the independent Office for National Statistics.

VAT Zero Rating

Mr Nicholas Brown: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 644W, on VAT, what his policy is on value added tax zero-rating. [29278]

Mr Gauke: Under longstanding agreements with our EU partners, we are permitted to retain our existing VAT zero rates. We may not, however, apply any new zero rates or extend the scope of existing ones.

The Government are committed to keeping everyday essentials such as food and children's clothing, as well as other zero-rated items like newspapers and printed books, free from VAT over the course of this Parliament.

Working Tax Credit

Naomi Long: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he plans to review the qualifying number of hours which a person must work in order to receive working tax credits. [28626]

Justine Greening: People who work less than 30 hours are not generally entitled to the working tax credit. However, the qualifying requirement is lower for some groups. For single adults with a child or those with a disability the qualifying requirement is 16 hours.

The new universal credit, to be introduced over the next two Parliaments, will replace the current complex system of means-tested working-age benefits with a simple streamlined payment. The universal credit will improve financial work incentives by ensuring that support is reduced at a consistent and managed rate as people return to work and increase their working hours and earnings.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Constituencies

Simon Kirby: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made on redrawing constituency boundaries; and if he will make a statement. [28785]

Mr Harper: The Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill includes provision to create fewer and more equal sized constituencies, and for the four Boundary Commissions to conduct a review of the constituencies in their respective areas by October 2013. The Bill is currently being considered by the House of Lords.

Electoral Register

Chris Ruane: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to ensure that hon. Members and other elected representatives are informed about *(a)* the size of their electorate each year and *(b)* the performance of electoral registration departments recorded by the Electoral Commission. [29284]

Mr Harper: Electoral registration figures are published annually by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and are publicly available at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=319

The ONS has placed a copy of the table containing the most up to date information in the House of Commons Library.

Information on the performance of electoral registration departments recorded by the Electoral Commission is also publicly available at:

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/performance-standards

Chris Ruane: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answers of 6 September 2010, *Official Report*, column 298W, on the electoral register, how many electoral registration officers have been reprimanded for a breach of official duty under section 9A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 since its entry into force. [29289]

Mr Harper: Breach of official duty under section 63 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 is a criminal offence. Any decision to bring a prosecution under section 63 would be made by the Crown Prosecution Service. There is no provision for the Electoral Commission or any other body to issue reprimands to electoral registration officers (EROs) under this section.

The Electoral Commission has established performance standards for EROs. Following this year's assessments, the Commission is in the process of contacting all EROs who have fallen below certain standards. In the first instance this will be to identify the reasons for poor performance and then to develop appropriate methods to ensure improvement.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan: Peacekeeping Operations

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what underpinning work his Department carried out prior to the announcement of the 2015 deadline for the withdrawal of British combat troops from Afghanistan. [27278]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 29 November 2010]*: Prior to the announcement by the Prime Minister that we will not have combat troops in Afghanistan by 2015, the Ministry of Defence was undertaking work along a number of themes, including examining the development of Afghan National Security Forces and looking at the future shape of operations in Afghanistan. This work continues as we begin the process of transition.

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his most recent assessment is of the strength and capabilities of the Afghan National Police. [27787]

Dr Fox: Excellent progress is being made on growing the Afghan National Police. As of the end of October the Government of Afghanistan report that they numbered approximately 116,000, and are currently ahead of schedule for meeting the target of 134,000 Afghan Police by the end of 2011.

International Security Assistance Force and the NATO Training Mission, Afghanistan are working hard to improve the capabilities of the Afghan National Police. In Helmand, this includes training both recruits and non-commissioned officers at the Helmand Police Training Centre.

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assistance his Department plans to provide to Afghanistan to help retain and develop its army and police following the proposed transfer of power from NATO to the Afghan National Forces. [27825]

Dr Fox: Following the transition announcement at the Lisbon conference, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is working through how best to support the Afghan authorities in providing security once the transition process is complete.

The UK military provides support to the development of the *Afghan National Security Forces* (ANSF) in three main ways: through embedding staff officers in NATO Training Mission Afghanistan (NTM-A) Headquarters, by providing trainers and support to NTM-A training institutions, and through the partnering of deployed ANSF in Helmand province.

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to help the Afghan Government reduce the attrition rate of its soldiers and police. [27826]

Dr Fox: Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) have an essential role providing both security and governance in Afghanistan and are a key part of our counter-insurgency strategy.

The Afghan Government has introduced a number of measures to improve the retention rate of the ANSF such as a pension scheme and a work cycle consisting of periods of operations, training and leave. The International Security Assistance Force continues to focus on expanding the ANSF and works to balance quality with quantity which the UK fully supports.

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's policy is on decompression in respect of *(a)* officials and *(b)* service personnel who have served in Afghanistan. [28236]

Dr Fox *[holding answer 2 December 2010]*: Decompression is available to all service personnel returning from operations in Afghanistan. It is conducted over a period of 36-hours at the Sovereign Base Area in Cyprus, a suitable location away from both the operational theatre and the emotional pressures of the homecoming. Civilian officials do not make use of these decompression facilities as there is no assessed requirement for them to do so.

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the likely effects on his Department's operations in Afghanistan of compliance with President Karzai's decree on private security companies; what discussions he has had with his Afghan counterpart on the decree; and if he will make a statement. [28332]

Dr Fox: Supplies are delivered to UK Forces in Afghanistan through a number of means including military and contractor convoys. Following President Karzai's decree on 16 August 2010 to disband private military security companies, UN Assistance Mission to

Afghanistan (UN-AMA) and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) have been working with the Government of Afghanistan on behalf of the International Community to implement the decree. Work is ongoing to develop an Afghan-led solution, including for convoy protection where required, which will include the use of elements of the Afghan National Security Forces.

Air Force: Military Bases

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on redevelopment at each RAF base in the UK in each of the last five years; and what estimate he has made of likely expenditure on work classified as redevelopment in each of the next five years. [27575]

Mr Robathan: The expenditure on redevelopment, defined as capital expenditure and minor new works, for the major RAF stations in the UK since financial year 2006-07 is shown in the following table:

Expenditure by station

				£ million
	2006-07	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
RAF Benson	0.6	2	1	2.2
RAF Boulmer	0.2	0	0.1	0.8
RAF Brampton/ Wyton/Henlow	0	0.2	3.2	1
RAF Brize Norton	8.1	13.4	31	14.3
RAF Coningsby	0	0	19	0
RAF Cottesmore	4	0.4	1.7	0.9
RAF Cosford	1.3	0.1	0.6	12
RAF Cranwell	0	0.8	2.7	2.6
RAF Fylingdales	0.1	0	0.2	0
RAF Halton	0.1	0.2	1.1	1
RAF High Wycombe	7.2	2.4	3	3.2
RAF Honington	1.5	0.2	6.8	8.7
RAF Kinloss	—	—	—	—
RAF Leeming	0.1	4.4	13.1	0
RAF Leuchars	—	—	—	—
RAF Linton on Ouse	6.4	0.5	7.6	1.1
RAF Lossiemouth	—	—	—	—
RAF Lyneham	2.2	0.9	1.6	2.2
RAF Marham	2.5	0	6	0
RAF Northolt	0.3	0.6	1.2	0.5
RAF Odiham	3.0	3.0	3.6	4.7
RAF Shawbury	0.3	0	0.5	0.8
RAF Spadeadam	0	0	0.1	0.2
RAF St Mawgan	0.08	0.2	0.4	0.4
RAF Valley	1	19.1	14.5	1.4
RAF Waddington	0	0.2	17.3	13
RAF Wittering	0	0.2	0.5	4

Information for the financial year 2005-06 is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Data for RAF stations in Scotland are not currently available and I will write to the right hon. and learned Member with the information requested.

The Ministry of Defence is in the process of completing its annual planning round which will allocate future programme budgets. This is expected to conclude in early 2011.

Armed Forces: Cadets

Michael Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent estimate he has made of the number of members of school cadet forces who pursue military careers. [29164]

Mr Robathan: While there is no requirement for recruits into the armed forces to state whether they had previously been a member of any cadet force, we estimate that approximately 25% of the intake to our Services has had some form of cadet experience.

Armed Forces: Mental Health Services

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much funding his Department plans to allocate to research on mental health issues in respect of serving personnel and veterans in each of the next three years. [28191]

Mr Robathan: The Ministry of Defence fully supports the need for high quality research which examines the mental health of current and ex-service personnel. We provide funding for military staff to work at the King's Centre for Military Health Research, which has conducted a number of highly-acclaimed studies over the past years into various aspects of defence health, including mental health. Funding over the next three years is estimated at some £1.25 million. In addition, the Surgeon General's Department has a research budget of £250,000 per annum, which can be used to fund research into areas of relevance to military medicine, including mental health.

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much funding his Department plans to allocate to the trial of an online early intervention service for serving personnel and veterans. [28192]

Mr Robathan: The Government are committed to the mental health of our armed forces, both while they are serving and after they have returned to civilian life. We are determined to ensure that those who need it receive the high standard of treatment and care that they deserve.

In his recent study into the mental health of serving and ex-serving personnel entitled "Fighting Fit", commissioned by the Prime Minister, the hon. Member for South West Wiltshire (Dr Murrison) made a number of recommendations, one of which was the trial of an online early intervention service for serving and ex-serving personnel. Plans are being finalised for development of this trial in close consultation with the Department of Health, who are responsible for the delivery of health care to those who have left the services. Details, including the extent of any direct financial contribution from the Ministry of Defence, have yet to be confirmed.

Armed Forces: Uniforms

Andrea Leadsom: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what types of boots are supplied to Army personnel; where each such type is manufactured; and what the *(a)* unit cost and *(b)* life expectancy is of each type of boot. [28593]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently has three contracts supplying 32 types of boot to armed forces personnel, most of which are used by the Army; two contracts are with UK companies, and the other is with a Spanish company.

The life expectancy of boots depends upon the purpose and the environment in which the boot is being used. In normal use, most boots have an expected life of around three years but combat boots in theatre have a life of about six months.

In accordance with European Union public procurement directives, it is at the discretion of the companies to choose where the manufacturing work is carried out, and the MOD does not routinely collect these data.

I am withholding the information on the unit price of the boots as its disclosure would prejudice commercial interests.

Departmental Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent estimate he has made of the number of questions to his Department tabled in the *(a)* House of Commons and *(b)* House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available. [28490]

Mr Robathan: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, the right hon. Member for Horsham (Mr Maude) on 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 884W.

In the case of questions that are deemed to be "round robin", The Guide to Parliamentary Work, published by the Leader of the House of Commons:

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/government-business/
parliamentary-business.aspx

states that Departments should not delay preparing an answer until "round robin" advice is provided, and should not miss the target deadlines for this reason.

Falkland Islands: Hercules Aircraft

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the likely effect on provision for the defence of the Falkland Islands of the use of the C130J aircraft as a replacement for the Nimrod MRA4; and if he will make a statement. [28335]

Peter Luff: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Minister for the Armed Forces my hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Nick Harvey) on 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 747W, to the hon. Member for Upper Bann (David Simpson).

The Government remain unequivocally committed to the defence of the Falkland Islands. Hercules C-130 aircraft will continue to play a role in this task, along with the many other military assets devoted to the task.

Iraq: Peacekeeping Operations

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many sorties the Nimrod MR.2 has flown over Iraq in support of Operation Telic in each year since 2003. [6310]

Dr Fox: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Military Exercises: RAF Welford

Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the multi-agency response to a fictitious scenario planned for the US base at RAF Welford will take place; and what agencies will be involved. [28505]

Mr Robathan: A table top exercise to test the interoperability of UK and US policing and security forces at United States Visiting Force (USVF) bases was held on 7-8 September 2010.

The exercise was attended by representatives from the following agencies: the Ministry of Defence (MOD) (including the MOD Police and Guarding Agency), the Home Office, the Royal Air Force, the United States Air Force, and five Home Department Police Forces.

Nimrod Aircraft

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the capabilities are of the *(a)* Nimrod MRA4, *(b)* Remotely Piloted Air System, *(c)* P3 Orion and *(d)* Breguet Atlantique in respect of (i) speed, (ii) range and (iii) equipment; and if he will make a statement. [27003]

Mr Robathan: The Nimrod MRA4 was planned to have maximum speed of up to 360 knots, and a range of 6,000 miles, or 14 hours without refuelling. I am withholding information about the capabilities we had planned for the MRA4 as its disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the armed forces. We have not made any assessment of the capabilities provided by any particular unmanned aerial vehicle in the maritime domain, nor of the P3 Orion or Breguet Atlantique.

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements he has made to *(a)* protect the carrier fleet, *(b)* provide strategic deterrent against submarines following the cancellation of the Nimrod MRA4; and if he will make a statement. [28412]

Peter Luff: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 28 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 450-51W, to the hon. Member for East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow (Mr McCann), the right hon. Member for Coventry North East (Mr Ainsworth) and the hon. Member for North Durham (Mr Jones), which made clear that we are now developing a longer term plan to mitigate the impact of the cancellation of Nimrod MRA4.

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the estimated programme cost for the Nimrod MRA4 was on the most recent date for which figures are available. [28482]

Mr Robathan: The estimate of procurement costs for the Nimrod MRA 4 programme as at 31 October 2010 was £3.6 billion.

In respect of other Nimrod MRA4 programme costs, the Ministry of Defence has made estimates of savings that would accrue from measures considered in the strategic defence and security review for the purposes of formulating policy. Some of these have been published to help inform the public debate. In the case of the Nimrod MRA4 we estimate that around £2 billion will be saved over the next 10 years, by not bringing the aircraft into service. Release of further detail may prejudice the MOD's negotiating position with its commercial suppliers. The MOD is therefore not prepared to release more detailed savings or updated estimated in-service cost figures at this time.

The total expenditure on the Nimrod MRA4 programme as at 31 October 2010 was approximately £3.9 billion including £3.4 billion for procurement costs.

Public Expenditure

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what additional funding his Department plans to allocate to increase the safety of UK ships importing energy supplies in each year of the Spending Review period. [26677]

Mr Robathan: Departmental funding is not allocated by task in this way. The protection of trade routes and merchant shipping is one of the primary roles of the Royal Navy. As announced in the Strategic Defence and Security Review, the Ministry of Defence will also support the new National Maritime Information Centre where departments will work together to monitor and maintain the maritime integrity of the UK. Energy security and supply is an important element of this. In the last six months the Government have made substantial progress in developing security relations between the UK and Norway, which is a key energy partner of the UK.

RAF Welford

Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what powers the unarmed guards assigned to duties at the US base at RAF Welford have. [28506]

Mr Robathan: All Ministry of Defence (MOD) Guard Service personnel have the power to make a citizen's arrest.

In addition to this, MOD Guard Service at RAF Welford also have a power of arrest as a crown servant under the RAF Welford bye-laws. These are authorised by the appropriate authority, who in this case is the RAF Station Commander at Welford.

Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost to the public purse is of the security enhancement to the US base at RAF Welford; and from which budget the expenditure was drawn. [28507]

Mr Robathan: RAF Welford is made available to the United States Visiting Force (USVF) under the NATO Status of Forces Agreement of 1951. The cost of the physical security enhancements made at the base was therefore met by the United States Air Force at no cost to the public purse.

Rescue Services

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of his Department's requirement for *(a)* maritime radar capability and *(b)* carrying of sonobuoys to fulfil search and rescue tasks; and if he will make a statement. [28413]

Mr Robathan: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 16 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 735W to the hon. Member for New Forest East (Dr Lewis); and the answer the Minister with responsibility for defence equipment, support and technology my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Worcestershire (Peter Luff) gave on 4 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 954W, to the hon. Member for Moray (Angus Robertson).

Our requirements for both maritime radar and sonobuoy capabilities were assessed during the strategic defence and security review and these are kept under regular review. The UK will continue to provide search and rescue services using a range of assets depending on the response required.

Trident

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many staff are employed on the Trident Value for Money review; [14334]

(2) how much has been spent to date on carrying out the value for money review of Trident; and what estimate he has made of the final cost [14335]

Mr Robathan: Two members of staff are employed full time on the Trident Value for Money review, with a number of other Ministry of Defence staff providing significant input to the review within the scope of their existing posts.

As at the end of August, the total cost of both officials assigned full time on the Trident Value for Money review is approximately £70,000. The final staff cost is estimated to be approximately £120,000.

In addition, there has been some expenditure on external assistance and technical consultancy for the Value for Money review and linked aspects of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. It has not been possible, in the time available, to determine the precise amount attributable to the Trident Value for Money review and I will write to the hon. Member in due course.

Substantive answer from Andrew Robathan to John Woodcock:

> You recently asked how much has been spent to date on carrying out the Value for Money review of Trident; and how much we estimate the final cost will be.
>
> While I was able to provide information on MOD staff costs I was unable to provide the total amount spent during the Value for Money review including external assistance or technical consultancy in the time available.
>
> I am now in a position to provide that information. The total expenditure for the Value for Money review is expected to be some £320,000 against a saving of £3.2 billion from the next 10 years.

Tessa Munt: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence by what mechanism his Department has achieved cost savings in joint work with the US to procure a common missile compartment for the planned successor submarine; and how much funding has been allocated by his Department to the common missile compartment project to date. [27414]

Dr Fox: By working collaboratively with the United States, the UK is sharing the costs of designing and integrating a missile compartment. This enables the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to avoid the significant costs associated with having to adapt and integrate a US only design into a UK submarine, or design and develop a bespoke UK missile compartment.

The decision to proceed with the Vanguard replacement submarines, including the Common Missile Compartment, will not be taken until the main gate decision point, which the Strategic Defence and Security Review confirmed is now planned for the next Parliament. As the design of the missile compartment matures, it is possible that further opportunities to reduce production and whole life costs will be identified.

The funding allocated to date by the MOD for the design of a Common Missile Compartment is approximately £283 million.

University Air Squadron Bursary

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the future of the University Air Squadron Bursary; and if he will make a statement. [28480]

Mr Robathan: The RAF currently has no plans to change the number of university air squadron bursaries that it offers per year. No decisions have yet been made on the future of bursaries following the Strategic Defence and Security Review announcement.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Council: Finance

Mr Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport whether his Department has undertaken an impact assessment in respect of the economic effects on the arts sector of the reduction in funding to organisations regularly funded by the Arts Council in the North East as a result of the outcomes of the comprehensive spending review. [27926]

Mr Vaizey: As part of the spending review, the Department will be reducing its own administrative budget by 50% and has asked a number of its arm's length bodies, including Arts Council England, to do the same. At a difficult time our aim has been to ensure that the maximum amount of funding is spent at the front line, rather than on bureaucracy. We had regular discussions with those arm's length bodies during the spending review and those discussions continue. We are confident that in cutting administration in order to limit cuts to the front line, arts organisations across the country, including those in the North East, will continue to thrive.

Arts: Rochdale

Simon Danczuk: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what recent assessment he has made of the likely effects of local authority funding reductions on arts organisations based in Rochdale metropolitan borough council area. [28343]

Mr Vaizey: It is central Government's role to empower local communities and local authorities to make the decisions that they feel are most appropriate for their area.

The Department will continue to fund the arts through Arts Council England, who provide support to a number of Regularly Funded Organisations across the country.

Arts: Warrington

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what recent assessment he has made of the likely effect on arts organisations based in Warrington of local authority funding reductions for arts projects. [28055]

Mr Vaizey: It is central Government's role to empower local communities and local authorities to make the decisions that they feel are most appropriate for their area.

The Department will continue to fund the arts through Arts Council England, who provide support to a number of Regularly Funded Organisations across the country.

BBC: Advertisements

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport whether he plans to request that the BBC broadcast Government advertisements. [29253]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: The Government are currently assessing options for public service messaging in the future.

Film: Public Finance

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what estimate he has made of the net savings to the public purse arising from the proposed new arrangements for the British Film Industry consequent on the closure of the UK Film Council. [29251]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: It would be premature to give an estimate of the savings now. We first need the due diligences to take place between BFI, UK Film Council and Film London. It would be inappropriate to comment at this stage.

The due diligence work has commenced following the film policy announcement on 29 November and it will provide robust figures when completed.

Jerwood Creative Bursaries Scheme: Graduates

Margot James: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport whether his Department's Jerwood Creative Bursaries Scheme is available to higher education graduates from further education colleges. [28312]

Mr Vaizey: The DCMS Jerwood Creative Bursaries Scheme is a pilot scheme open to arts graduates who graduated from their first degree in 2009 or 2010. Those with an NVQ level 4 or 5 qualification are also eligible. Advice provided by Jerwood, as managers of the scheme, to the first round of host organisations stated that graduates who gained their first degree or equivalent from higher education institutions were eligible to apply; additionally Jerwood aim to be as flexible as possible with eligibility criteria and attempt to assess exceptions on a case by case basis, within necessary limitations on time and resources. Host organisations for the second round have been advised that the focus should be on the level of qualification achieved, rather than where the qualification was gained.

Museums: Finance

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how much funding he plans to make available to each of the non-national museums in each of the next three years. [29252]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: The table shows the funding allocated to each of the Department's non-national museums.

The Design Museum, National Coalmining Museum, People's History Museum and Tyne and Wear Museums and Archives receive grant funding only. The Geffrye Museum, Horniman Museum and Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester receive grant in aid.

£ million

Museum	*2011-12*	*2012-13*	*2013-14*	*2014-15*
Design Museum	0.328	0.257	0.202	0.163
Geffrye Museum	1.674	1.645	1.621	1.616
Horniman Museum	4.275	4.199	4.139	4.127
Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester	3.998	3.927	3.871	3.860
National Coalmining Museum	2.707	2.657	2.616	2.608
People's History Museum	0.168	0.164	0.162	0.162
Tyne and Wear Museums and Archives	1.918	1.893	1.872	1.868

Olympic Games 2012

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what assessment he has made of the potential legacy for southern coastal resorts of the London 2012 Olympics; and if he will make a statement. [28779]

Hugh Robertson: The Government and the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) established the Nations and Regions Group to ensure UK-wide engagement and to maximise the legacy from London 2012. This group works directly with representatives from each of the nations and English regions to realise the sporting, economic, and cultural benefits of the 2012 games.

The southern coastal resorts stand to gain from the wide range of opportunities created by the 2012 games, through businesses winning games-related work, increased tourism and cultural celebrations. Some examples of how the south coast, and specifically your own constituency, will benefit from the games are given as follows.

Over 15,000 schools and colleges across the UK have registered for LOCOG's London 2012 education programme Get Set. 2,446 schools and colleges are registered in the south-east. In the Brighton and Hove local authority area 49 schools and colleges have registered for Get Set.

Over 890 cultural or sporting projects across the UK have been awarded the Inspire mark. In the south east 78 projects have been awarded Inspire marks, some of these projects are based in the southern coastal resorts. One example is Brighton and Hove Primary Schools Language and International Project which links 34 primary schools together, and encourages focused learning and inter-school activities to bring children together from across the city.

In addition, 204 contracts have been awarded by the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) to suppliers in the south-east and some of these suppliers are also based in southern coastal towns. One of the suppliers is Brighton and Hove city council which has provided business services and consultancy.

So far 22,209 companies in the region have registered on Competefor (the website where London 2012 contract opportunities are advertised), and 169 contracts have been awarded to Competefor suppliers. Not all the information on 'supply chain' level contracts is in the public domain. There may be other companies that have secured 'supply chain' contracts in the region.

The Minister for Sport and Olympics has recently announced the 'Places People Play' programme, which will bring sporting legacy to life in communities across the country. This will be achieved by transforming the places where people play sport, inspiring people to make sport happen at a local level and creating sporting opportunities that give everyone the chance to become part of the mass participation legacy. Further detail can be found at the following link:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/news_stories/7565.aspx

Locations across the UK, particularly those that are hosting international teams in pre-games training camps (PGTCs), have additional opportunities to realise the economic benefits of the games. 13 agreements have been signed with teams to hold PGTCs in the south-east.

In addition, enhancements to the Weymouth and Portland sailing venue were completed in November 2008. The National Sailing Academy will benefit from the improved facilities that the games will leave behind, providing a state-of-the-art facility for elite training, competition and local community use.

Sport England: Finance

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how much funding *(a)* Sport England and *(b)* the Football Foundation provided for youth football development by (i) Premier, (ii) Championship, (iii) League and (iv) Conference football clubs in the period 2005 to 2009; and how much such funding each body plans to provide in the period 2009 to 2013. [28754]

Hugh Robertson: Sport England has advised that between 2005 and 2009 they provided a total of £11 million in funding for youth football development through the Whole Sport Plan, and between 2006 and 2009 the

Football Foundation provided a total of £59.1 million. Sport England does not hold the breakdown by different divisions.

For the period 2009 to 2013, Sport England will provide a total of £25.6 million towards youth football development, while the Football Foundation will provide £47 million in funding.

In agreement with Sport England, how the funding is used is a matter for the Football Association and the Football Foundation.

UK School Games

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport in what ways the School Olympics will differ from the UK School Games; and if he will make a statement. [27408]

Hugh Robertson: Unlike the UK School Games, the Olympic and Paralympic-style School Sports Competition will be based on school and not regional participation. It will not be a single event catering for only our most talented young athletes, but a package of events and activities across England, inspiring a generation of young people to compete in sport. The aim is to ensure all children get an opportunity to participate in competitive sport, not just elite athletes.

The national level event in 2012 will build on the good work that has been achieved through the UK School Games, as a showcase for our most talented youngsters to compete against each other, on behalf of their schools.

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what conclusions he drew from his visit to the UK School Games in 2010; and if he will make a statement. [27409]

Hugh Robertson: Attending this year's Games served to strengthen our commitment to deliver an exciting, inclusive, and engaging Olympic and Paralympic-style school sports competition, with the power to change lives in every school in the country.

On his visit to the Games this year, the Secretary of State was particularly interested to see the Athletes Village atmosphere and enjoyed meeting young people gearing up to perform at their very best.

The new competition will include a package of events for schools, including a national event, and we will ensure the national event builds on the successes of the UK School Games.

UN Food and Agriculture Organisation

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what assessment he has made of the compliance of *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its agency and *(c)* its non-departmental public bodies with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber. [27854]

John Penrose: The Department does not in its day to day work source timber; however we are aware of the compliance issues through attending workshops run by the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET), and advised our agency and arm's length bodies of the requirements.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Attorney-General what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28348]

The Solicitor-General: Budgetary responsibility lies with the Accounting Officers for the Law Officers' Departments. Nevertheless the Law Officers expect each of those Accounting Officers to ensure maximum value for money in respect of all expenditure and to ensure that any expenditure is necessary and appropriate. The information relating to specific LOD's is as follows.

The Attorney-General's Office has no planned expenditure on conferences in 2010-11 other than for training purposes. Such events would only take place if there was a significant business need, and every effort would be made to maximise value for money.

The Treasury Solicitor's Department has no planned expenditure on conferences in 2010-11 other than for training purposes. In some years the Department has held an all staff conference but will not hold such a conference in 2010-11.

The Government Legal Service (GLS) Secretariat, a part of the Department, usually organises an annual conference for GLS lawyers across Government, but no GLS conference will be held 2010-11.

HMCPSI has taken the following steps to reduce expenditure on conferences:

No staff conferences are now held outside London.

Wherever possible HMCPSI facilities are used.

Where it is not possible to use HMCPSI facilities, other Government departmental facilities are used at nil cost.

Attendance at conferences for staff training purposes will be authorised only where there is a clear business need.

The Serious Fraud Office's expenditure for conferences would have to be met within a tight budget framework given the need for the SFO to meet the reduction in funding following the comprehensive spending review, and therefore there would have to be a significant business need or spend to save opportunity for any conferences to go ahead. At present the SFO has no plans to hold any internal staff conferences.

Attendance at conferences for staff training purposes will be authorised only where there is a clear business need.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), like other Government Departments, is subject to budget reductions and must make cost savings. The CPS has implemented a freeze on new Government advertising and marketing spend for the remainder of the financial year 2010-11. Conferences fall within this expenditure.

If the CPS does run a conference or event, such as the annual Senior Managers' Conference, CPS premises rather than outside venues are used wherever possible to maximise value for money. Attendance at conferences for staff training purposes will be authorised only where there is a clear business need.

The National Fraud Authority (NFA), since May 2010, has observed the cross- Government guidance on marketing by Departments and has not funded any conferences. External conferences are only attended by the NFA where a highly compelling business requirement can be justified, identifying cost savings where possible.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Attorney-General what estimate he has made of the Law Officers' Departments' expenditure on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28389]

The Solicitor-General: The information requested is as follows:

The Treasury Solicitor's Department (TSol), the Attorney-General's Office (AGO), HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) accounting systems do not capture spend on printing by type of document, and so it is therefore not possible to provide complete figures for all the various categories of document without incurring a disproportionate cost. The information that is available is detailed as follows.

TSol routinely publishes as Command or House of Commons papers each year, an Annual Report and Accounts and Crown's Nominee Accounts. Additionally it publishes annual Resource Accounts which include the accounts of the AGO and HMCPSI and is laid under Act. The estimated cost of printing these accounts, including design and typesetting, for each of the last three years is:

	£
2009-10	9,335
2008-09	9,794
2007-08	8,185

The total publication costs incurred by the CPS of producing the CPS Annual Report and Resource Accounts is contained in the following table. These documents were presented to Parliament under Act.

Annual report

Accounting year	*£ million*
2001-02	0.031
2002-03	0.075
2003-04	0.039
2004-05	0.079
2005-06	0.036
2006-07	0.038
2007-08	0.053
2008-09	0.013
2009-10	0.009

Since it launched in October 2008 the National Fraud Authority has spent £2,146 in 2008-09 and £2,058 in 2009-10 on printing papers presented to Parliament under Act.

The Serious Fraud Office has spent the following on publishing papers presented to Parliament under Act. Printing costs are not recorded separately from publication costs and could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Resource accounts

Accounting year	£
2000-01	53
2001-02	2,216
2002-03	2,564
2003-04	2,662
2004-05	2,242
2005-06	2,519
2006-07	2,244
2007-08	1,840
2008-09	1,340
2009-10	1,156

Annual report

Accounting year	£
2000-01	9,420
2001-02	25,093
2002-03	32,973
2003-04	35,396
2004-05	18,449
2005-06	34,130
2006-07	31,960
2007-08	25,773
2008-09	38,867
2009-10	18,982

European Financial Stability Mechanism

Mr Cash: To ask the Attorney-General what advice he has given to Cabinet colleagues on the legality of the European Financial Stability Mechanism in relation to its application to the United Kingdom. [29298]

The Attorney-General: By long-standing convention, observed by successive Administrations and embodied in the Ministerial Code, whether or not the Law Officers have advised or have been requested to advise on a particular issue, and the content of any advice, is not disclosed outside Government.

Public Expenditure

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Attorney-General whether his Department undertook an equality impact assessment of the outcome of the comprehensive spending review. [29117]

The Attorney-General: There have been no equality impact assessments undertaken by the Law Officer's Departments following the outcome of the comprehensive spending review.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) accounts for more than 90% of the Law Officer's departmental vote expenditure, and will face a budget reduction of 25% following the outcome of the comprehensive spending review. Planning is currently under way to ensure this reduction is achieved and equality impact assessments will be undertaken as part of this process.

The planned budget reductions are service wide and not specific to any geographical area or group of staff.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Business: Employment Schemes

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will provide *(a)* cash and *(b)* other incentives to businesses to employ jobseekers who formerly claimed incapacity benefit. [28416]

Mr Prisk: The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has not in the past provided financial incentives of this nature to employers to encourage them to employ workless people and there are no plans to do so in the future.

Support to help people move into employment falls within wider employment support, which is developed and managed by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Charity Research Support Fund

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) how much funding from the public purse was spent on the Charity Research Support Fund in 2009-10; [28772]

(2) how much the charitable sector contributed to research supported by the Charity Research Support Fund in 2009-10. [28773]

Mr Willetts: Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) allocated £193.6 million in 2009-10 to higher education institutions in England as the charity support element of quality related (QR) research funding. Official data for research funding from charities to higher education institutions in 2009-10 are not yet available. In 2008-09, the most recent data available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, the charitable sector spent £665 million on research in English HEIs.

Company Liquidations

Mr Robin Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which statutory bodies are responsible for ensuring that company liquidations are initiated and performed according to legal requirements; and how many *(a)* formal investigations have been undertaken and *(b)* charges have been brought in respect of liquidations in each of the last three years. [27919]

Mr Davey: There are different routes for a company to enter liquidation. Compulsory liquidations result from a winding-up order made by the court on the petition in most cases of a creditor. In a few cases the petition may be presented by a Government body such as the Insolvency Service in the public interest and very occasionally by the company itself. On the making of a winding-up order the Official Receiver is appointed as liquidator.

Creditors' voluntary liquidations result from an extraordinary resolution by a company's shareholders that an insolvency practitioner should be appointed as liquidator.

A liquidator in either type of liquidation does not carry out a criminal investigation. However, if any prima facie criminal offences come to their attention, they have a statutory duty to report such matters to the appropriate prosecuting authority, which in almost all liquidation cases is the Legal Services Directorate of the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), or to the relevant police authority, for them to decide whether to investigate the matters further.

The Legal Services Directorate of the BIS receives complaints from a number of sources (but predominantly the Insolvency Service) concerning misconduct during the insolvency of companies and individuals. It is not possible to identify from the case tracking system whether the case referred to and investigated by this directorate arose as a result of a compulsory or voluntary liquidation or indeed whether the company referred is not in liquidation at all. In addition, specific charges are not entered onto the case tracking system when proceedings are instituted by this department but rather the charges are entered when a plea is entered and a conviction and sentence or acquittal is recorded. The Legal Services Directorate are therefore unable to state how many charges have been brought in respect of liquidations in each of the last three years.

Consumer Protection and Markets Authority

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the likely cost to the public purse of any redundancy following the transfer of functions of *(a)* the Consumer Affairs branch of the Office of Fair Trading and *(b)* Consumer Direct. [28318]

Mr Davey: No estimate has yet been made within the OFT of the likely cost to the public purse of any redundancy following the transfer of functions of Consumer Direct or of OFT consumer functions.

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the budget was of *(a)* Consumer Direct and *(b)* the Consumer Affairs branch of the Office of Fair Trading in the latest period for which figures are available. [28320]

Mr Davey: In the financial year 2010/11, the net budget for running Consumer Direct was set at £10.815 million and the net budget for the Strategic Solution Project was set at £4.199 million.

The Strategic Solution Project aimed to secure the continuation of the Consumer Direct service beyond the expiry of existing contracts in March 2011. The project was on target to deliver a single contract for the provision of Consumer Direct up to 2016-17 but the procurement process was suspended in light of the government's ICT moratorium. The future operation of Consumer Direct will depend on the detail of the transfer of the service to Citizens Advice, which is not yet confirmed.

The Office of Fair Trading does not have a separate Consumer Affairs branch. Since 2006 its structure has been arranged by markets rather than legislation, enabling it to look more easily at whole markets and to use all of the competition and consumer protection tools available to it to improve them where they are not operating effectively.

Departmental Billing

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what guidelines his Department follows on the prompt payment of suppliers. [29210]

Mr Davey: Upon receipt of a correctly rendered invoice the Department will aim to pay valid invoices as soon as possible with a target of five working days from date of receipt and within 30 days at the latest in line with our standard terms and conditions. The Department publishes its payment performance at

http://www.bis.gov.uk/about/procurement/prompt-payment/bis-payment-performance

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28349]

Mr Davey: Since my appointment I have taken action to reduce expenditure in general, and administration in particular, across this Department and partner organisations. As a result, departmental expenditure (excluding partner organisations) on conferences is expected to reduce by over 40% this year, when compared to last year.

Departmental Grants

Anas Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much funding his Department has allocated in grants for *(a)* 2009-10 and *(b)* 2010-11; and how much such funding he plans to allocate for 2011-12. [25817]

Mr Davey *[holding answer 22 November 2010]:* In 2009-10 the Department incurred grant expenditure totalling £3 billion. This figure excludes grants paid to the Department's agencies.

For 2010-11 the Department is currently forecasting to spend around £3 billion on grants.

The Department is currently undertaking an internal allocation exercise to determine detailed allocations for 2011-12 but does not yet have a forecast for grant allocations for the next financial year.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much his Department and its predecessors spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28157]

Mr Davey: Spend on press cuttings services by the Department's Press Office since 2002-03 is:

		Total excluding VAT (£)
2002-03	DTI	237,040.13
2003-04	DTI	229,177.49
2004-05	DTI	224,082.56
2005-06	DTI	[1]189,759.41
2006-07	DTI	255,477.33
2007-08	DTI/BERR	228,651.51
2007-08	DIUS	43,083.97
2008-09	BERR	247,936.88
2008-09	DIUS	51,702.32
2009-10	BERR/BIS	275,977.22
2009-10	DIUS[2]	8,865.96
2010-11	BIS to October 2010	78,609.27

[1] This is for nine months; three months data not available. [2] Before creation of BIS.

Information about spend on press cuttings before 2002-03 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

These figures cover the costs of producing and distributing electronic and printed copies of the daily press cuttings.

Significant savings have been achieved in the current financial year by reducing the number of printed copies of the cuttings and by continuously refining the search terms.

EU External Trade: Colombia and Peru

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what timetable he has set for the ratification by Parliament of the provisions of the EU-Andean (Peru and Colombia) Free Trade Agreement. [28459]

Mr Prisk: We expect signature of the EU-Andean Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2011, before which the FTA would be subject to UK parliamentary scrutiny procedures. European Council legal advisers will determine whether the agreement is mixed competence, in which case it will need to be ratified by national parliaments. If, as expected, the FTA is mixed competence, we expect the UK ratification process to begin following signature later in 2011 or 2012. It would take several months to complete the secondary legislation required to ratify the FTA.

EU Law

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by his Department; and what estimate he has made of the cost of each such transposition. [27481]

Mr Davey: This Department has 17 EU directives pending transposition into domestic legislation. These are at various stages of transposition, and the costs involved can be found in public records, on the individual impact assessments. The Government's Regulatory Forward Programme, to be published in due course for 2010/11, will contain information about measures to be implemented.

Financial Inclusion Fund

Paul Blomfield: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the effect on specialist debt advice services of the time taken to determine the future level of funding for the Financial Inclusion Fund. [28178]

Mr Davey: The Department has been working closely with the different teams that make up its Face-to-Face debt advice project to ensure they continue to deliver debt advice to people in financial difficulty even during an uncertain time for the project itself. At present time we expect the project to meet its overall target of seeing around 90,000 people by the end of this current financial year.

The Government carried out an internal review of support for debt advice provision earlier this year which is now informing our thinking about the future. Final decisions regarding further funding for specific debt advice organisations will be taken once the implications of the spending review have been worked through.

Financial Reporting Council

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment his Department made of the suitability for appointment of Glen Moreno as Deputy Chairman of the Financial Reporting Council; what assessment he has made of the performance of the Financial Reporting Council against its objective to promote high quality corporate governance; and if he will make a statement. [29128]

Mr Davey: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has every confidence in Glen Moreno, who was appointed Deputy Chair of the Financial Reporting Council through an open competition. I similarly have every confidence in the Financial Reporting Council's work on corporate governance, including the new revision of the Corporate Governance Code and the publication this year of the first Stewardship Code for shareholders.

Higher Education: Admissions

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people of each socio-economic group resident in Newcastle Central constituency applied to attend university at institutions *(a)* outside the North East and *(b)* nationally in academic year 2010-11; and how many in each group were successful in their applications. [29211]

Mr Willetts: HEFCE uses two different groupings of areas to define participation in higher education: one based on the participation rates of young (19 and under) people in HE (which is used by HEFCE when looking at young full-time entrants); and one based on the proportion of adults who hold HE qualifications (which is used by HEFCE when looking at part-time and mature full-time entrants). Because this table includes applicants and accepted applicants of all ages it breaks down applicants by the HE qualified adults' measure.

The Newcastle upon Tyne Central constituency has been identified using the home postcode regardless of declared area of permanent residence.

Total number of applicants and accepted applicants from Newcastle upon Tyne constituency who applied to at least one institution outside the north-east, by adult qualification rate quintile—Year of entry 2010

Adult qualification rate quintile	Applicants to at least one institution outside north-east	Accepted to institution outside north-east	Accepted to north-east institution
1	40	11	15
2	86	31	33
3	54	11	22
4	358	104	141
5	85	59	10
Grand total	623	216	221

Notes:

1. Excluding a small number of applicants for whom adult qualification rate data were not available. Applicants include those who applied in main scheme and clearing so are not directly comparable with those above.

2. The data presented are for the provisional end of year 2010 captured on 13 October 2010. Final end of year data will be available from 20 January 2011.

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people of each socio-economic group resident in Newcastle Central constituency applied to attend Newcastle University in the academic year 2010-11; and how many in each group were successful in their applications. [29212]

Mr Willetts: Information on applicants to full-time undergraduate higher education courses is collected by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). UCAS do not issue data by individual higher education institutions as this is the subject of a confidentiality agreement between UCAS and the institutions.

Higher Education: Crawley

Henry Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he plans to allocate further higher education places to the University centre to Crawley project following the implementation of the proposals in the Browne Review of higher education funding. [27961]

Mr Willetts: Full details of the spending envelope for higher education, including whether there is an allocation of funds and student places for the 'University Challenge' project and the proposal for Crawley, will be published in the forthcoming Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) grant letter, which will be issued before Christmas.

Higher Education: Finance

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Southport of 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 405W, on higher education: finance, what estimate he has made of the funding each university will receive from *(a)* the public purse and *(b)* tuition fees in each of the first five years following the implementation of his proposals for higher education funding and tuition fees; and if he will make a statement. [29080]

Mr Willetts: Grant allocations to higher education institutions (HEI) are for the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) within the overall funding made available by the Department. HEFCE's funding for 2011-12 will be published in its annual grant letter before Christmas this year. Funding for subsequent years has not yet been determined. The level of tuition fees is for individual HEIs to determine. They have not yet set the fees for academic year 2012/13 or subsequent years.

Higher Education: Part-time Education

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has made an estimate of the number of part-time degree entrants at *(a)* the Open University and *(b)* other higher education institutions in (i) 2008-09 and (ii) 2009-10. [28444]

Mr Willetts: Information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) shows in the 2008/09 academic year, of the 70,195 part-time first degree entrants, 36,015 (51%) studied at the Open University and 34,180 (49%) at other UK higher education institutions.

Figures for the 2009/10 academic year will be available in January 2011.

Higher Education: Recruitment

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many higher education institutions have received financial penalties for over-recruitment in the last academic year. [28443]

Mr Willetts: 60 institutions had their grant adjusted for this reason in 2009-10.

Higher Education: Student Numbers

Graham Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people in each region were in higher education in each year from January 2005 to January 2010. [28509]

Mr Willetts: The latest available information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is shown in the following table. Figures for the 2009/10 academic year will be available in January 2011.

UK Domiciled Enrolments[1] by Government Office Region of Domicile UK Higher Education Institutions. Academic years 2004/05 to 2008/09

Government Office Region	*2004/05*	*2005/06*	*2006/07*	*2007/08*	*2008/09*
North East	76,200	77,655	80,225	78,995	82,245
North West	214,835	219,060	220,930	204,530	216,265
Yorkshire and the Humber	138,395	140,515	141,205	139,275	144,500
East Midlands	120,105	121,715	122,370	123,620	128,300
West Midlands	155,800	157,205	157,385	159,940	166,420
East	156,480	154,950	157,485	158,555	165,155
London	293,655	300,595	302,930	308,745	320,480
South East	253,105	256,715	258,305	257,100	264,220
South West	149,355	151,550	150,785	148,980	156,355
Wales	105,300	104,460	104,880	101,965	102,395
Scotland	178,290	179,395	181,850	175,115	178,215
Northern Ireland	65,460	65,730	62,065	62,300	61,990
Guernsey Jersey and Isle of Man	5,850	5,960	5,895	4,735	4,635
UK region unknown	5,020	8,460	11,550	9,595	9,865
England region unknown	21,305	30,230	20,855	30,870	26,045
Total	1,939,150	1,974,195	1,978,715	1,964,315	2,027,085

[1] Covers enrolments on all levels and modes of study.

Note:

Figures are based on a HESA standard registration population and have been rounded to the nearest five.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Graham Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people resident in *(a)* Haslingden and *(b)* Hyndburn were in higher education in each year from January 2005 to January 2010. [28662]

Mr Willetts: The latest available information from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is shown in the following table. Figures for Haslingden are not available as data is not collected to this detailed level. Students studying higher education courses at further education colleges are not included.

Figures for the 2009/10 academic year will be available in January 2011. The Department has recently received updated postcode information therefore figures may not match those previously published.

Enrolments[1] from Hyndburn parliamentary constituency[2] UK Higher Education Institutions. Academic years 2004/05 to 2008/09

Academic year	*Enrolments*
2004/05	2,325
2005/06	2,290
2006/07	2,335
2007/08	2,040
2008/09	2,245

[1] Covers enrolments on all levels and modes of study.

[2] Excludes enrolments whose parliamentary constituency could not be established due to missing or invalid postcode information.

Note:

Figures are based on a HESA standard registration population and have been rounded to the nearest five.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

North East Advisory Panel

Mr Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 342W, on the North East of England Development Board, what the functions of the North East Advisory Panel are. [29146]

Mr Prisk: The principal function of the North East Investment Advisory Panel is to advise One North East on applications for regional selective assistance under the Grant for Business Investment (GBI) scheme of over £250,000 and less than £2 million.

From time to time the panel is also asked to advise One North East on: applications for selective financial assistance that fall outside current forms of support; applications submitted under the Tees Valley Industrial programme (TVIP); proposals to make major modifications to existing forms of support; proposals to introduce new forms of support under Section 8 of the Industrial Development Act 1982; administrative aspects of GBI and other schemes; and to provide information on the state of the regional economy to the Government Office for the North East as part of its quarterly report.

Mr Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills who the members of the North East Advisory Panel are. [29159]

Mr Prisk: The current membership of the North East Investment Advisory Panel is:

Lucy Armstrong Consultant, The Alchemists Northern Ltd. (Acting Chair)

Patrica Alexander Managing Director, Shared Interests Ltd.

David Armstrong Consultant (Offshore Sector)

Paul Bartlett Former Director, Artenius UK Ltd.

Chris Gill Finance Director, Wellstream International Ltd.

Robert Hardy Managing Director, Aescia Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

Gillian Hall Partner, Watson Burton LLP

Stephen Hope Operations Director, Amec

Bill Naylor Managing Director, Naylors Chartered Surveyors

John Pike Former Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Union Snack Ltd.

Stephen Turner Vice President and Project Director, Thales UK Ltd.

Overseas Students: Student Numbers

Damian Hinds: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many students from other EU member states studied at universities in the UK in each of the last five years. [28669]

Mr Willetts: The latest information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is available in the table. These figures are also published in Table 1 of HESA's Statistical First Release which will be updated with 2009/10 figures in January 2011:

http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/view/1578/161/

EU-domiciled enrolments[1], UK higher education institutions, academic years 2004/05 to 2008/09

Academic year	*EU-domiciled enrolments*
2004/05	93,995
2005/06	99,985
2006/07	105,410
2007/08	112,150
2008/09	117,660

[1] Covers enrolments to all levels and modes of study.

Note:

Figures are based on a HESA standard registration population and have been rounded to the nearest five.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Overseas Trade: Transcaucasus

Karen Lumley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the level was of UK *(a)* trade and *(b)* investment to and from (i) Azerbaijan, (ii) Armenia and (iii) Georgia in (A) 2007, (B) 2008 and (C) 2009. [29158]

Mr Prisk: The following data for trade in goods are taken from HMRC Overseas Trade Statistics.

£ million

	UK exports of goods			*UK imports of goods*		
	2007	*2008*	*2009*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Azerbaijan	240.1	304.0	271.3	109.3	122.2	50.6
Armenia	11.8	9.7	8.5	0.5	0.9	0.5
Georgia	34.3	38.1	25.6	144.2	103.2	157.7

The following data for trade in services is taken from the ONS UK Balance of Payments Pink Book. The data for 2007 come from the 2009 edition and may not be fully consistent with the data published in 2010 for the other two years.

£ million

	UK exports of services			*UK imports of services*		
	2007	*2008*	*2009*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Azerbaijan	287	313	237	107	120	124
Armenia	3	7	7	4	5	3
Georgia	16	57	27	3	5	10

Data on foreign direct investment (FDI) for the three years requested are not available. In the Office for National Statistics estimates of the UK's FDI positions, it did not identify any inward FDI from Azerbaijan, Armenia or Georgia at the end of 2008, or any outward FDI from the UK in Armenia. Data for UK FDI in Azerbaijan and Georgia involved a small number of investors and so would be disclosive if published.

Re-Export Controls Bill

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what his policy is on the provisions of the Re-Export Controls Bill [*Lords*]; what the evidential basis is for that policy; and if he will make a statement. [28009]

Mr Davey: The UK has one of the most robust strategic export licensing systems in the world and I do not believe that the introduction of re-export controls would make it more so.

Re-export controls are unenforceable. Once a good has left the UK, it is in practice under the jurisdiction of the destination country. We would be claiming that UK export controls applied, whereas in reality we would have no powers to enforce them.

We do agree that it is undesirable for UK-origin goods to be re-exported to destinations or end-users of concern. That is why the risk of undesirable re-export is embedded in our assessment of licence applications: where the risk of such a re-export is sufficiently high, an export licence will not be granted.

If a re-export of concern comes to light we can and do factor that in to our assessment of subsequent licence applications for similar goods to that destination. In practice, a re-export control would give us no extra powers.

My noble Friend Baroness Wilcox responded for the Government during the second reading of Lord Alton's Private Members Bill (Re-export Controls) on 3 December 2010, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column 1667.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent representations he has received on the provisions of the Re-Export Controls Bill [*Lords*]; how many such representations expressed *(a)* support for and *(b)* opposition to the principle of the Bill; what response he provided in each case; if he will place in the Library a copy of each such response; and if he will make a statement. [28010]

Mr Prisk: My hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, received a letter from the noble Lord Alton on 17 November in support of his Re-export Controls Bill. My hon. Friend responded on 23 November and suggested that the noble Lord Alton raised the issues with my noble Friend Baroness Wilcox at their pre-arranged meeting on 23 November. Amnesty International UK, Oxfam GB and Saferworld also made comments in favour of the Bill when they met me on Wednesday 1 December.

The Department additionally received a note from the Export Group for Aerospace and Defence (EGAD) on 30 November, which sets out their general opposition to the principle of re-export controls. We do not intend to respond to this statement.

I have arranged for these items of correspondence to be placed within the Libraries of the House.

My noble Friend Baroness Wilcox responded for the Government during the Second Reading of Lord Alton's Private Member's Bill (the Re-export Controls Bill) on 3 December 2010, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column 1667.

Regional Development Agencies: Assets

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what his most recent estimate is of the monetary value of *(a)* freehold land and property assets and *(b)* business and technology-related assets held by (i) Advantage West Midlands, (ii) the East of England Development Agency, (iii) the East Midlands Development Agency, (iv) the North West Development Agency, (v) One North-East, (vi) the South East England Development Agency, (vii) the South West England Development Agency and (viii) Yorkshire Forward. [28173]

Mr Prisk: The RDAs' audited accounts to 31 March 2010 provide the most recent valuation of land and property assets as follows:

RDA	*Valuation as at 31 March 2010 (£000)*
AWM	106,587
EEDA	11,315
EMDA	18,463
NWDA	57,678
ONE	53,834
SEEDA	107,896
SWRDA	66,660
YF	89,895

These figures include land and buildings, investment properties and development assets as set out in RDA accounts. The information on business and technology assets is not held centrally in the format requested, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

RRS Discovery

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what expenditure *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Natural Environment Research Council have incurred to date on the procurement of the Natural Environment Research Council's new research vessel. [28398]

Mr Willetts: The Natural Environment Research Council has incurred a total of £18.3 million on its new research vessel. This includes resources provided by the Department from the Large Facilities Capital Fund.

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what consideration the Natural Environment Research Council gave to outsourcing research functions before deciding to procure a new research vessel. [28399]

Mr Willetts: The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) considered a range of options for outsourcing aspects before proceeding to procure a new research vessel.

NERC made a formal assessment of the option of utilising private sector capability for scientific data acquisition. This option was not pursued as it provided the weakest value for money case in net present value terms in accordance with HM Treasury Green Book guidance.

The outsourcing of the research function in its entirety would not have met the statement of requirement for the new vessel, particularly in respect of the enduring need to provide barter, swap and collaboration opportunities to deliver world-class multi-disciplinary marine science.

As part of its comprehensive review of ship operations in 2008/9, NERC concluded that the lack of guaranteed availability of vessels with the right capabilities to deliver world-class multi-disciplinary science programmes precluded exercising an option to charter in research ship time to replace the RRS Discovery.

NERC sought bids for a long-term maintenance contract option as part of the production of the RRS Discovery replacement. A thorough assessment of the qualifying submissions which included long-term maintenance responses was conducted and NERC concluded that a design and build was the most affordable approach at that time.

NERC continues to be open to the possibility of outsourcing the operation of its research vessels (as distinct from outsourcing the research), and will keep this under review.

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what proportion of the construction costs of Natural Environment Research Council's new research vessel will be paid to UK companies. [28401]

Mr Willetts: Approximately 20% of the construction costs of NERC's new research vessel will be paid to UK companies.

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the estimated cost of the Natural Environment Research Council's new research vessel was at the time the decision to procure was made. [28402]

Mr Willetts: The estimated total cost of bringing the ship into service at the time the procurement decision was made in March 2010 was £75 million.

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills for what reasons the costs of procuring the new Natural Environment Research Council's research vessel have risen from £55 million in 2009 to £75 million; for what reasons this increase has been accepted by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [28403]

Mr Willetts: The figure of £55 million was an early planning figure from 2005 before the Discovery Replacement Project was initiated. In November 2008, NERC Council agreed a revised funding envelope of £70 million to £75 million to encompass an extended project scope and the latest market intelligence information on shipbuilding, material costs, and design risk, and to allow for the prevailing currency weakness. This deterioration in exchange rate accounted for most of the increased cost. The Department accepted that this increase was principally due to a factor outside NERC's control.

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the purchase cost was of the Natural Environment Research Council's vessel, RSS Discovery. [28404]

Mr Willetts: In 1962/63 the RRS Discovery was purchased at a cost of nearly £900,000. In 1991/92 approximately £12 million was spent on a major refit and refurbishment of the vessel.

The total project cost for the purchase of the replacement for RRS Discovery contracted in March 2010 is £75 million. Of this the contract for the vessel is £66.718 million.

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills for what reasons the Natural Environment Research Council contracted Skipsteknisk to design its new research vessel; what account was taken of Skipsteknisk's performance in its work on the National Environment Research Council research vessel, James Cook, in making this decision; and if he will make a statement. [28405]

Mr Willetts: The decision to appoint Skipsteknisk AS as the lead design authority the replacement of RRS Discovery was taken by the shipyard (C.N.P. Freire SA) as part of its bid to build the vessel, not the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC).

Skipsteknisk AS is a world renowned and leading designer of research ships. It designed the RRS James Cook which has been deployed extensively by the NERC on research projects with little or no downtime since delivery in August 2006. The appointment of Skipsteknisk AS is allowing NERC the benefit of improving on areas of design utilising lessons learned from the RRS James Cook Project.

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what consideration the Natural Environment Research Council gave to utilising private sector capability for scientific data acquisition when taking the decision to proceed with the procurement of its new research vessel. [28406]

Mr Willetts: The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) formally reviewed eight options in its assessment of a requirement to deliver an enduring marine science capability. Utilising private sector capability for scientific data acquisition was subject to a formal business case assessment as a 'Charter' option. This option was not pursued as it provided the weakest value for money case in net present value terms in accordance with HM Treasury Green Book guidance. A thorough assessment of the qualifying submissions which included long-term maintenance responses was conducted and NERC concluded that a design and build was the most affordable and practical approach at that time.

The private sector currently has the ability to collect routine survey data sets; however few private sector vessels are capable of acquiring the complex multi-disciplinary data sets required simultaneously in support of UK marine research interests. This is primarily because the private sector platforms are optimised to collect data of specific types, whereas the NERC research vessels have been designed to perform multi-disciplinary science ranging from the atmosphere to the sub seabed, as an increasing trend in marine research is the inter-action between biological, chemical, physical and geological processes.

Self-employed: Young People

Michael Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent estimate he has made of the proportion of self-employed businesses which are run by individuals between the age of 16 and 24 years in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Sevenoaks constituency. [29166]

Mr Prisk: The Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey showed that 4.1% of individuals in the UK identifying themselves as self-employed in July to September 2010 were aged between 16 and 24 years. Robust estimates of this proportion are not available for Sevenoaks constituency.

Students: Grants

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what proportion of students *(a)* normally resident in (i) Bristol East constituency and (ii) Bristol and *(b)* nationally were awarded (A) a full maintenance grant, (B) a partial grant and (C) special support grant in the latest period for which figures are available: [27941]

(2) how many students normally resident in Bristol East constituency were awarded a *(a)* full maintenance grant, *(b)* partial grant and *(c)* special support grant in the latest period for which figures are available. [27942]

Mr Willetts: The maintenance grant is available to students who have entered higher education since 2006-07. The special support grant is available in place of the maintenance grant for full-time students who can claim income-related benefits. Both have the same level of full grant (£2,906 in 2010/11), and are means-tested with partial grants available.

Grants awarded[1] in academic year 2009/10, Bristol[2] and England

		Applicants (thousand)		*Percentage*	
		England	*Bristol*	*England*	*Bristol*
Maintenance grant and special support grant	Full grant	340.2	2.5	39	43
	Partial grant	199.4	1.2	23	20
	Nil grant[3]	340.4	2.1	39	37
Of which:					
Maintenance grant	Full grant	313.7	2.3	—	—
	Partial grant	197.3	1.2	—	—
Special support grant	Full grant	26.5	0.2	—	—
	Partial grant	2.1	*	—	—

* = Less than 50 applicants

[1] The table covers applicants for student support who entered higher education in 2006/07 or later. Excludes those who received an NHS bursary.

[2] Applicants normally resident in the Bristol local authority area.

[3] Not awarded a grant because their household residual income is greater than the threshold to receive a grant, or they have not supplied income information. Eligible applicants may receive other forms of support.

Source:

Student Loans Company

3% of applicants were awarded a special support grant, both in Bristol and at England level. Robust information is not available at constituency level.

Timber

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the compliance of *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* its non-departmental public bodies with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber. [27855]

Mr Davey: Contractors engaged by the Department are required to comply with the DEFRA guidance. The tender documents issued to potential contractors state that wood products must be purchased from sustainable sources and the potential contractors are required to provide certificates of compliance in their tender submissions.

I have approached the chief executives of the Insolvency Service, Companies House, National Measurement Office and the Intellectual Property Office and they will respond directly to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Speed, dated 29 November 2010:

The Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has asked me to reply to your question what assessment he has made of the compliance of (a) his Department, (b) its agencies and (c) its non-departmental public bodies with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber.

The Insolvency Service Executive Agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has made no assessment of the compliance of the UN Food Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber.

Letter from John Alty, dated 30 November 2010:

I am responding in respect of the Intellectual Property Office to your Parliamentary Question tabled 26 November 2010, to the Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

The Intellectual Property Office does not purchase timber direct. However, furniture is purchased through the Office of Government Commerce's (OGC) Buying Solutions Framework agreement where it is a requirement that preferred suppliers hold the relevant Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. Where we engage the use of contractors for minor building work requirements, they must provide evidence that timber products are sourced from managed and sustainable sources.

Letter from Geoff Russell, dated 1 December 2010:

Thank you for your parliamentary question regarding what assessment has been made by the Skills Funding Agency of its compliance with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber.

Please note that the Skills Funding Agency does not source timber.

Letter from Gareth Jones, dated 1 December 2010:

I am replying on behalf of Companies House to your Parliamentary Question tabled 26 November 2010, UIN 27855 to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Companies House has written into all specifications for work that requires the use of timber, that we will only accept timber from a proven sustainable source.

Letter from Peter Mason, dated 3 December 2010:

I am responding in respect of the National Measurement Office (NMO) to your Parliamentary Question tabled 26th November 2010, asking the Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the compliance by his Department and its Agencies with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber.

Because of NMO's responsibility for the site in Teddington on which both it and the National Physical Laboratory are located, our principal interest in the use of sustainable timber is in relation to buildings and site infrastructure. The site Facilities Management contractor is required to compile and maintain a recording system to monitor any timber usage in the course of providing the services by species and volume. Written confirmation is required that all timbers utilised have been obtained from sustainable sources.

I can confirm that timber purchased satisfies the approved schemes of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber which meet the Government's sustainability criteria. These criteria are the same as those referred to by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

In addition, NMO's general office procurement (such as the purchase of paper to Forest Stewardship Council standards) is reviewed as part of the Sustainable Development in Government process.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Council of Europe Convention against Human Trafficking

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the scope for professional discretion and flexibility in respect of the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention against Human Trafficking. [29070]

Damian Green: There is flexibility in how the Council of Europe Convention against Human Trafficking is implemented, as giving effect to it does not require legislation. The UK is fully compliant with the Convention.

Crime: Alcoholic Drinks

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many alcohol-attributable *(a)* violent crimes and *(b)* sexual offences per 1,000 crimes were recorded in (i) each local authority in Wiltshire, (ii) Wiltshire and (iii) England in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [28039]

James Brokenshire: The information requested is not available centrally. It is not possible to determine the number of offences which were attributable to the effects of alcohol from the police recorded crime data collected by the Home Office.

Crime: Victims

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the ethnic group was of each *(a)* offender and *(b)* victim of each crime motivated by prejudice in 2009. [29103]

Mr Blunt: I have been asked to reply.

The ethnic group of each offender proceeded against at the magistrates courts for racially or religiously, aggravated indictable offences is available in the following table.

Data on the ethnicity of the victim are not collected centrally, but previous editions of the British Crime Survey (BCS) have explored racially motivated crime.

Number of persons proceeded against at the magistrates courts for racially or religiously aggravated indictable offences[1], by ethnicity, England and Wales, 2009[2, 3]

	Number
White	4,313
Black	387
Asian	215
Other	97
Not recorded/not known	1,045
Total	6,057

[1] Includes offences under the following statutes:
Offences against the Person Act 1861:
Common Law and Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
Public Order Act 1986
Protection from Harassment Act 1997
Criminal Damage Act 1971

[2] The figures given in the table on court proceedings relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[3] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

Source:
Justice Statistics Analytical Services - Ministry of Justice.

Drug Interventions Programme

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she has made an assessment of the effectiveness of Drug Interventions Programme in the last six months. [27960]

James Brokenshire: The Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) was established in 2003 to tackle class A drug misusing offenders by identifying, assessing and case-managing them to ensure they access treatment. In 2009-10, DIP was effective in managing approximately 58,000 adult class A drug misusing offenders into treatment.

Some of the interventions were introduced in the Drugs Act 2005 and, in September 2010, the Department published the Post-Legislative Assessment of the Drugs Act 2005 (Cm 7935) for consideration by the Home Affairs Select Committee. This provided a preliminary assessment of the implementation and operation of the Drugs Act 2005, and showed that:

> the introduction of testing on arrest and the initial and follow up assessment had significantly increased the number of those tested and those attending an assessment.
>
> these powers had improved the grip exerted on drug using offenders through the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP).

Human Trafficking: EU Law

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discretionary provisions the implementation of the proposed EU Directive on human trafficking would make mandatory; and if she will make a statement. [29069]

Damian Green: The Explanatory Memorandum submitted by the Home Office to Parliament on 25 May (8157/10) sets out in more detail any discretionary provisions the implementation of the proposed EU directive on human trafficking would make mandatory.

The Government chose not to opt in at the start but will review that decision once the text of the directive is adopted.

Licensing

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when she expects to announce the conclusion of her review of the Licensing Act 2003; and if she will make a statement. [28780]

James Brokenshire: The Government's response to the alcohol licensing consultation was published on 1 December 2010. This sets out the changes that we will make to the licensing regime which stem from the commitments in the coalition agreement. The Government's response can be found at the following weblink:

> http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/drugs/alcohol/rebalancing-consultation/

UK Border Agency: Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what external agencies and organisations the UK Border Agency engages in Northern Ireland to provide services to asylum seekers; and what the total cost of those services was in each of the last three years. [28674]

Damian Green: The UK Border Agency uses two external agencies in Northern Ireland, the Refugee Council and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. UK Border Agency has a Grant Agreement with Refugee Council to supply One Stop Services and Initial Accommodation 'wraparound' services. The costs for this service over the last three years are:

	£
2008-09	537,147
2009-10	527,316
2010-11	452,147

Northern Ireland Housing Executive provides housing for asylum seekers. Total costs for this service for the last three years from July 2008 are:

	£
2008-09	1,362,580
2009-10	2,254,329
2010-11	1,405,101

2010-11 are currently projections as costs for housing varies depending on numbers.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* budget and *(b)* expenditure outturn was for the UK Border Agency's operations in Northern Ireland in each year since the Agency's formation. [28675]

Damian Green: The budget and expenditure outturn for the UK Border Agency's operations in Northern Ireland is as follows:

Resource costs	£
2009-10	
Actual	5,875,896
Budget	5,382,725
2010-11	
Budget	4,865,993

Note:

These are directly attributable costs to each of the operations that the Immigration Group and Border Force have in Northern Ireland. There are costs that are held centrally like IT, Property and Management overheads that are not allocated out and hence are not included in the costs above.

EDUCATION

Academies: Durham

Pat Glass: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what discussions he has had on plans to build a new academy school in Consett, North West Durham in the last three months; [25509]

(2) if he will release immediately the funding to build a new academy school in Consett, North West Durham; and if he will make a statement. [25510]

Mr Gibb: The Secretary of State has not, in the last three months, had any telephone discussions regarding plans for a new academy in Consett, north-west Durham. On 8 October 2010 the Secretary of State wrote to Professor Christopher Higgins, vice chancellor of Durham university, regarding capital funding, and on the same date he also wrote to Councillor Owen Temple regarding the location of the academy in Consett.

The comprehensive spending review set out how much capital funding the Department will receive for projects. There are a group of academy building projects, of which Consett is one, where Ministers have not yet made a decision about which should be funded or how much funding they will receive. We aim to confirm how much will be allocated to each project by the end of the year. Plans to open the Consett academy in its existing buildings continue to be developed.

Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what financial support his Department plans to allocate to the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom in the financial year *(a)* 2010-11, *(b)* 2011-12 and *(c)* 2012-13. [23356]

Mr Gibb: As we made clear in our response of 25 October to the report from the Children, Schools and Families Committee's Transforming Education Outside the Classroom of 1 April 2010, the Government recognises the valuable role that Learning Outside the Classroom can play in a child's educational experience.

The Government also made clear in their response that it is for the Council and its member organisations to take the lead in working directly with schools and providers. This is consistent with the government's approach to education—that school leaders and other front-line professionals should be free to make decisions about how to use the resources available to them. School budgets will see an increase in funding of £3.6 billion in cash terms by the end of Spending Review period.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the proportion of recipients of education maintenance allowance likely to receive *(a)* financial assistance from the Discretionary Learner Support fund and *(b)* receive the same level of assistance from the Discretionary Learner Support fund in the 2011-12 academic year as they are receiving in 2010-11. [26429]

Mr Gibb: Decisions regarding the new discretionary fund will be made locally, enabling schools, colleges and training providers to target support at those young people in greatest need. The Government do not intend to dictate to schools, colleges and training providers how many young people should receive support under the new arrangements, or what level of support they should receive.

The current discretionary scheme supports around 200,000 young people each year.

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many young people who were eligible for free school meals in year 11 in each local authority area have claimed education maintenance allowance in each year since its inception. [26432]

Mr Gibb: This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who operate the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener the YPLA's chief executive, will write to the hon. Member for Wigan with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in *Hansard* and the House Libraries.

Education Maintenance Allowance: Greater London

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) how many young people resident in *(a)* West Ham constituency, *(b)* Newham and *(c)* London are eligible for education maintenance allowance; [26490]

(2) how many young people resident in *(a)* West Ham constituency, *(b)* Newham and *(c)* London have applied for education maintenance allowance since the inception of that scheme. [26491]

Mr Gibb: These are matters for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who operate the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, will write to the hon. Member for West Ham with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Libraries.

Education Maintenance Allowance: Warrington

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much funding he expects to be allocated to each school in Warrington under his proposals to abolish education maintenance allowance and replace it with sums paid out at the discretion of head teachers. [23605]

Mr Gibb: The enhanced discretionary learner support fund replacing EMA will enable schools, colleges and training providers more effectively to target those young people who actually need the support to enable them to participate in education.

We plan to allocate the enhanced funding in line with the timetable for overall funding allocations for schools and colleges, which will be made by the end of March.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much his Department will allocate to each school and college in Warrington under the Government's plans to replace the education maintenance allowance in the first 12 months of such arrangements. [24975]

Mr Gibb: We will replace EMA with an enhanced discretionary learner support fund, based on the existing arrangement for discretionary learner support so that schools, colleges and training providers can more effectively target those young people who actually need the support to enable them to participate in education.

We plan to allocate the enhanced funding in line with the timetable for overall funding allocations for schools and colleges, which will be made by the end of March.

Educational Under-achievement

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps he has taken to reduce the level of educational under-achievement since his appointment. [26622]

Mr Gibb: Since his appointment, the Secretary of State for Education has introduced a number of significant steps to reduce levels of educational under-achievement. First, the Academies Act 2010 enabled the expansion of the Academy programme and the introduction of free schools to offer schools more freedom and autonomy in their drive to tackle under-achievement. Furthermore, in the Education White Paper presented before the House, the Secretary of State has outlined reforms to reduce educational under-achievement through measures to support teachers and the teaching profession, ensure rigorous standards in the classroom and help schools to drive their own improvement. This includes a new focus on higher floor standards in both primary and secondary phases.

Pupils: Disadvantaged

Iain Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much of the funding allocated to High Performing Specialist Schools in 2010-11 will be redistributed to the pupil premium in each year from 2011-12 to 2014-15. [24422]

Mr Gibb: The pupil premium will be funded from outside the schools budget. On 20 October the Government announced in the spending review that we are bringing together schools funding streams into the dedicated schools grant, which will include the high performing specialist schools funding.

Details of the how the Department's programme funding will be allocated will be announced in due course. We are considering carefully how funding can be used to best effect, in line with our priorities in relation to services for children, young people and their families.

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the number of children in Oxford West and Abingdon constituency who will receive the proposed pupil premium. [26385]

Mr Gibb: We are considering the responses to the consultation on school funding which ended on 18 October, including the question of which deprivation indicator to use. The number of children eligible, either in a constituency or in England as a whole, will depend on this decision.

Schools: Private Finance Initiative

Andrea Leadsom: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what guidance he has provided to schools that wish to convert to academy or free school status that are subject to a private finance initiative contract. [25708]

Mr Gibb: The Department's advice to schools which are part of a PFI contract is that they will remain part of the contract after conversion to Academy status.

Arrangements for each PFI school converting to Academy status are specific to that school. However, the normal arrangement is that two additional legal agreements are put in place. First, a schools agreement, made between the academy trust and the local authority, which contains the obligations of the parties necessary for continued fulfilment of the PFI contract. Second, a principal agreement made between the local authority, the academy trust and the Secretary of State, which contains indemnification for the authority in relation to various obligations of the Academy. When a PFI school applies to convert, officials provide specific advice and guidance. We do not expect that any free schools would be subject to an existing PFI contract, but if they were, similar arrangements would apply.

Schools: Rural Areas

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what mechanisms he plans to put in place to ensure that the determination of the level of direct funding of schools takes into account additional costs associated with schooling in rural communities. [25537]

Mr Gibb: The Dedicated Schools Grant includes £200 million of underlying funding for sparsity in 2010-11, to recognise that small rural schools are more expensive to run. Further information on the future direction of school funding have been set out in the White Paper which has now been published.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 8 December 2010

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Departmental Manpower

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many agency staff his Department and its non-departmental public bodies employ at each pay grade. [27792]

Robert Neill: The following table shows the breakdown of admin and clerical staff by grade working in the Department of Communities and Local Government as of 4 November 2010. The Department engages in total 10 admin and clerical staff. At EO, SEO and G7 there are fewer than five individuals engaged. We cannot disclose the exact number owing to reasons of confidentiality. The five agency staff are funded by the Ministry of Justice to cover the costs of a short term service provided by DCLG.

Grade	*Number of agency staff*
AA	0
AO	6
EO	<5
HEO	0
SEO	<5
G7	<5
G6	0
SCS	0

DCLG does not hold central staff records for its non-departmental public bodies and this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Housing Benefit

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether social landlords letting properties in local authority areas where social rents are in excess of 80 per cent. of market rent will be required to reduce rents when the affordable rent model is introduced. [29232]

Grant Shapps: Social landlords will not be obliged to charge a different rent on social rented properties due to the introduction of affordable rent. None of the new affordable rent proposals have any impact on existing social tenancies.

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether a social rented home under his proposed affordable rent model would be classified as affordable if the rent were in excess of the housing benefit cap. [29233]

Grant Shapps: Affordable rent levels can be up to maximum of 80% of local open market rents. Our expectation is that providers will want to take into account housing benefit caps when setting rents.

Local Government Boundary Commission

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans he has for the work of the Local Government Boundary Commission; and if he will make a statement. [29314]

Robert Neill: The work programme of the independent Local Government Boundary Commission is a matter for it and this House to which it is accountable for its budget through the Speaker's Committee. Under the statute my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State may request the Commission to undertake reviews of administrative boundaries, but currently has no plans to do so.

Local Government Finance

Mr Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what reserves were held by each *(a)* local authority and *(b)* category of local authority in (i) 2009-10 and (ii) 2010-11. [29226]

Robert Neill: I have today placed in the Library of the House a table that gives, by each local authority in England, and for each class of local authority in England, the non-school reserve level figures for the start and end of the financial years, revenue expenditure data for each financial year and non-school reserves at 31 March as a percentage of revenue expenditure for (i) 2009-10 (outturn) and (ii) 2010-11 (budget).

Newcastle Airport

Mr Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent representations he has received on payments made to chief operating officers and chief financial officers as a result of the refinancing of Newcastle airport; and what his policy is on the making of payments outside normal salary arrangements to senior officials as a result of financing agreements made by local authorities and their trading partners. [29173]

Robert Neill: Neither the Department for Communities and Local Government, nor the Department for Transport, have received any representations on payments made to chief operating officers and chief financial officers at Newcastle airport. All payments made to senior officers by their local authority employers and their trading partners must be lawful and locally justifiable. The forthcoming Localism Bill will contain provisions to increase accountability and transparency over the setting of senior officers' pay packages.

WALES

Railways

13. **Kevin Brennan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on the electrification of the great western main line. [28263]

Mrs Gillan: I refer the hon. Gentleman to my oral response to the hon. Member for Dwyfor Meirionnydd (Mr Llwyd) earlier today.

RAF Valley

14. **Albert Owen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions she has had with ministerial colleagues on the likely effects on RAF Valley of the outcomes of the strategic defence and security review; and if she will make a statement. [28264]

Mr David Jones: The Government are addressing the full range of issues affecting the defence estates following the strategic defence and security review.

Devolution

Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when she last met the First Minister for Wales to discuss the implications for Wales of the Government's proposals for constitutional change. [29182]

Mrs Gillan: I regularly meet with the First Minister, to discuss a wide range of issues including constitutional reform. The most recent meeting was on 6 December.

Great Western Railway: Electrification

Dr Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on the timetable for electrification of the Great Western main line. [28261]

Mrs Gillan: I have had, and continue to have, discussions with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport about this matter. We have already announced £7 billion of rail infrastructure improvements that will reduce journey times to Cardiff by 15 minutes and we will now work with the Welsh Assembly Government on the business case for further electrification.

TRANSPORT

Bus Services: Concessions

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many older people were eligible to receive a free bus pass in each local authority area in the latest period for which figures are available; and what methodology he uses to determine the number of older people that are eligible to receive such passes. [29311]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport does not maintain figures concerning the number of older people eligible to receive a free bus pass.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes details on the number of people aged over 60 and living in England At the mid-point of 2009 there were 11.5 million people aged 60 and over living in England. This figure can be broken down to local authority level and this breakdown has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Until 6 April 2010, the eligible age for concessionary travel was 60 and therefore all 11.5 million people included within the ONS figures were eligible to receive a free bus pass.

Since 6 April 2010, the eligible age for concessionary travel for both men and women has been linked to the state pension age for women.

As the pensionable age for women increases from 60 to 65 so too will the age of eligibility for concessionary travel. The age of eligibility will increase in line with any future changes to the state pension age for women. It will therefore not be possible to derive straightforward estimates of the number of older people eligible for concessionary travel from future ONS figures.

Concessionary travel is a devolved policy area so the arrangements in England differ from those in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland—the number of people of eligible age in those areas is a matter for the relevant authorities.

Departmental Consultants

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the management consultancy for which his Department paid AECOM Ltd. (i) £100,000 on 2 July 2010 and (ii) £150,000 on 22 July 2010. [27223]

Mrs Villiers: The payments to AECOM Ltd relate to the joint Department for Transport-Regional transport study considering access to/around the Tyne and Wear city region for freight and passengers, and the joint Department for Transport-Northern Way transport study considering movements between (and beyond) Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield for freight and passengers.

Further details of the purpose of the studies can be found on the Department's website at:

www.dft.gov.uk

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the management consultancy for which his Department paid MVA Consultancy £107,819.18 on 9 July 2010. [27224]

Mrs Villiers: The payment to MVA Consultancy is in relation to a Department for Transport led study considering challenges on Strategic National Corridor (SNC) 10 between London and Yorkshire (taking account of movements to and from the North East and Scotland) for freight and passenger movement.

Further details of the purpose of the study can be found on the Department's website at:

www.dft.gov.uk

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the expenditure of his Department and its predecessors on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28373]

Norman Baker: Publications are produced through various channels depending on value for money and official publishing requirements. Separating out the costs for each publication from the wider communication costs would require manual analysis of the Department's electronic financial system, which would require extensive resources and could be done only at disproportionate cost. The position is further complicated, in that over this 10-year period, some publications were managed and procured by the departmental publishing team and others were managed and procured by TSO (The Stationery Office) directly.

Driving: Licensing

Mark Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reason Directive 2009/113/EC has not been implemented in the UK in respect of driving licence rules for eyesight, epilepsy and diabetes; and what deadline the European Commission has set for implementation of the Directive in member states. [29241]

Mike Penning: The UK has considered carefully, with the Secretary of State for Transport's expert medical panels, proposals to make changes to the standards. We are awaiting final cross-Government clearances before public consultation.

Member states can have stricter health standards for driver licensing than those included in the directive. However, the deadline for implementing the directive for member states not meeting the minimum health standards was 25 August 2010.

Freight Facilities Grant

Cathy Jamieson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding his Department plans to provide for the Freight Facilities Grant in each of the next three years. [26909]

Mike Penning: No formal announcement on the future of the Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) scheme has yet been made by the Department for Transport. Following the spending review settlement, we are currently considering what budgets will be available across a number of the Department's smaller programmes (including FFG).

Parking: Fees and Charges

Mr Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 18 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 434W, on parking: fees and charges, whether any companies have been removed from the list of parking enforcement companies eligible to receive Driver and Licensing Agency vehicle keeper data since November 2009. [28642]

Norman Baker: Since November 2009, six companies have had their access to Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency vehicle keeper data terminated.

Parking: Fines

Mr Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 815W, on parking: fines, which six local authorities have written to his Department on increases in charges for parking penalties. [29130]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The approaches received by the Department for Transport to review parking penalty charges were from the following:

Hartlepool Borough Council

Lincolnshire County Council

Somerset County Council

St Albans City and District Council

Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Council jointly

Railways: Brighton

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the likely effects of raising the existing cap on rail fares on *(a)* the number of journeys (i) by train and (ii) by car, *(b)* levels of carbon dioxide emissions and *(c)* road congestion between Brighton and Hove and London; and if he will make a statement. [20169]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport expects that rail passenger journeys will continue to increase during the period from 2012 to 2014.

Railways: Construction

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which proposals in the Network Rail Control Period 4 delivery plan in each *(a)* nation and *(b)* region of England (a) are being carried out as scheduled, (b) are being carried out with a delayed completion date, (c) are suspended or pending and (d) have been cancelled; for what reason each proposal not carried out as scheduled has been (i) delayed, (ii) suspended and (iii) cancelled; and what the cost of each proposal is, expressed in 2009 prices. [26075]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 23 November 2010]*: The scope and costs of the Network Rail Control Period 4 delivery plan are determined by Network Rail and, when approved by the independent Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), are published by Network Rail. Changes to this plan are subject to rail industry consultation and to approval by the ORR, which publishes all such approvals. Despite a tough spending review, the great majority of Government investment in rail infrastructure in England and Wales has been confirmed. The Government expects to announce its position on the remaining projects shortly. The specification and funding of infrastructure outputs in Scotland is a devolved matter.

Road Traffic Controls

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effects of speed humps on vehicle suspension systems. [28552]

Norman Baker: In 2004 the Department commissioned the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL), to evaluate the impact of road humps on vehicle suspension systems. TRL found no evidence of any damage, provided the humps were constructed to the requirements of the

Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1999 and were driven over at an appropriate speed. The research report is available from the TRL website at:

www.trl.co.uk

under the title 'TRL Report 614: Impact of road humps on vehicles and their occupants'.

The Department's Local Transport Note 1/07: 'Traffic Calming' also summarises this and other research into traffic calming. It is available from the Department's website at:

www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/ltnotes/

Road Traffic Controls: Ambulance Services

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effects of speed humps on ambulance services. [28551]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport has not carried out any research specifically into the impact of road humps on ambulance services.

Local highway authorities must consult the local emergency services on the practicality of any proposed road hump measures in relation to their response times and vehicle types. 'Traffic Advisory Leaflet 1/07: Emergency services traffic calming schemes: A code of practice', published in 2007, sets out good practice arrangements for consultation.

Road Works

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proposals he has for introducing a road lane rental mechanism for utility firms which wish to excavate on the public highway; and if he will make a statement. [27773]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* The Department for Transport's business plan includes a commitment, by December 2011, to consult on and finalise regulations enabling new lane rental schemes in England. Once the necessary legislation is in place, it would then be for local highway authorities to submit proposals for approval.

Roads: Construction

Jack Lopresti: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will review his Department's circular on Planning the Strategic Road Network to allow local decisions on infrastructure changes. [29383]

Mike Penning: There are no plans to update the circular, but we will consider whether revision is necessary following wider reforms to the planning system, which are intended to lift the burden of bureaucracy and empower communities to do things their way.

Circular 2/07 on "Planning and The Strategic Road Network" exists to ensure that the impacts of new development on the network can be properly mitigated and does not worsen transport conditions for local residents. It explains the Government's policy in relation to development near the strategic road network and how the Department will use its powers to prevent the network becoming overloaded.

Roads: Snow and Ice

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* financial and *(b)* physical resources are available to the Highways Agency to deal with adverse winter weather; what plans he has for the future level of such resources; and if he will make a statement. [25599]

Mike Penning: The Highways Agency is responsible for maintaining the strategic motorway and trunk road network in England. The maintenance works, including the provision of a robust winter service, are delivered by Highways Agency contractors who are paid through fixed price contracts covering a range of routine maintenance activities. The cost for winter maintenance activity is included within the Highways Agency's annual budget, with a typical cost of £20 million. In addition to the preparations it has made for the winter ahead and following the recommendations in the Independent Winter Resilience Review led by David Quarmby, the Highways Agency is also facilitating the import of 250,000 tonnes of salt as a strategic reserve to support local highway authorities. The costs for this salt acquisition, storage and management will be reimbursed by authorities who receive salt from the strategic stocks.

With respect to physical resources, the Highways Agency fleet of 437 new winter service vehicles (gritters), all with snow ploughs ready to be mounted during snow conditions, together with an additional 23 snow blowers, are ready for deployment. Prior to the current period of severe winter weather, the Highways Agency contractors held over 250,000 tonnes in their depots ready for use.

Following the comprehensive spending review, Departments are assessing and confirming detailed allocations to their individual business areas. The Highways Agency is undertaking a review of all of its maintenance activities including winter service to maximise value for money and to ensure that priority areas receive the level of future funding required to maintain the appropriate level of service.

Severn Bridge: Tolls

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects credit card payment facilities to be made permanently available for users of the Severn Crossing. [26330]

Mike Penning *[holding answer 25 November 2010]:* The Highways Agency anticipates that a permanent card payment system will be fully operational early next year.

Transport: Aberdeenshire

Miss Begg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 303W, on transport: Aberdeenshire, what information his Department holds on major transport infrastructure projects which have been completed in the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire local authority areas between 1980 and 1999. [28637]

Norman Baker: None. As I indicated in my previous reply, this is devolved to the Scottish Government and is therefore a matter for Scottish Ministers.

Transport: Concessions

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what special grant funding he plans to allocate to each integrated transport authority to carry out its statutory duty to fund the national concessionary travel scheme in each of the next three years. [26181]

Norman Baker: Special grant funding provided by the Department for Transport to integrated transport authorities (ITAs) was only intended to cover the period from 2008-09 through to 2010-11. From April 2011 this funding will be subsumed into formula grant alongside the rest of the funding for concessionary travel which gives local authorities the freedom and flexibility they want in their use of funding. ITAs will therefore need to obtain the entirety of their funding to carry out their statutory duties in relation to concessionary travel through the levying process with metropolitan district councils.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Energy Supply

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many homes in *(a)* the west midlands, *(b)* London and the south-east, *(c)* England and *(d)* the UK received electricity supply from renewable sources in the last year; and if he will make a statement. [28874]

Charles Hendry: The majority of renewable electricity generated is supplied to the National Grid, who then transmit it across the country, so all grid connected UK homes will receive some electricity originating from renewable sources. DECC holds data on the total amount of electricity supplied by renewable sources, as well as total domestic electricity consumption. DECC does not collect data on the number of homes supplied solely by renewables—these would be homes directly connected to a renewable electricity generation facility and not taking any supply from the National Grid.

In 2009, 6.7% of electricity generated in the UK was from renewable sources.

EU Law

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by his Department; and what estimate he has made of the cost of each such transposition. [27497]

Gregory Barker: The following EU directives are pending transposition by my Department. Total estimated economic, social and environmental costs and benefits are presented in present value terms from published impact assessments where available:

1. 2009/72/EC—Electricity directive. EU Third Package concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity. Costs yet to be confirmed.

2. 2009/73/EC Gas directive. EU Third Package concerning common rules for the internal market in gas. Costs yet to be confirmed.

3. 2009/71/Euratom Safety of nuclear installations. Costs yet to be confirmed.

4. 2009/28/EC Promoting the use of energy from renewable sources. Cost £19.85 billion; Benefit £11billion.

5. 2009/31/EC Storage of CO_2. Costs yet to be confirmed.

6. 2009/119/EC Oil stocking. Imposing an obligation to maintain minimum stocks of crude oil and/or petroleum products. Costs yet to be confirmed.

7. 2009/29/EC Directive amending 2003/87/EC so as to improve and extend the

greenhouse gas emission allowance trading scheme of the Community. Costs yet to be confirmed.

In addition, we have consulted on the inclusion of nitrous oxide in the EU ETS (2003/87/EC). Cost £32.3 million; Benefit £508.3 million.

Geothermal Power

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change for what reason the UK Renewable Energy Strategy anticipates no contribution from deep geothermal energy; for what reason his Department has reduced the level of grant funding to the deep geothermal industry; what his policy is on deep geothermal heat and power; and if he will make a statement. [28426]

Charles Hendry: The UK Renewable Energy Strategy (RES) was published by DECC in July 2009. It recognised the potential of deep geothermal energy, noting (page 43) that:

"although...geothermal [power] projects are not included in the lead scenario, they could contribute going forward".

Reflecting this positive view of the technology, the RES also noted (page 145) that:

"as it matures [deep geothermal power] could become a significant player in the UK's energy landscape".

The RES also announced a commitment of financial support to the deep geothermal sector, through an initiative which became the Deep Geothermal Challenge Fund.

The decision to reduce the level of grant funding for deep geothermal projects this year from £2 million to £1 million was taken in July as part of DECC's £85 million contribution to the overall Government effort to deliver £6 billion of savings in this financial year.

The Government recognise the potential of deep geothermal energy as a low carbon, renewable and non-intermittent energy form that can produce both power and heat, and have encouraged it through the Deep Geothermal Challenge Fund.

Renewable Energy

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent assessment he has made of the UK's capacity to meet the EU renewable energy target for 2010; and if he will make a statement. [28875]

Charles Hendry: The EU 2020 renewable energy target requires the UK to obtain 15% of its energy (electricity, heat and transport) from renewable sources by 2020. We also inherited from the previous Government a non-legally binding target for 10% of UK electricity to be from renewable sources by the end of 2010.

As a result of the failure to make sufficient progress in past years, the UK will miss the 2010 renewable electricity target this year. However, analysis of the pipeline indicates that the rate of deployment is increasing and we estimate reaching 10% in 2012.

For 2020, the latest statistics show that 3% of our energy came from renewable sources at the end of 2009[1]. Analysis carried out in 2009 shows that meeting our 2020 target is challenging but achievable. We will publish a Renewables Delivery Plan in the spring which will drive faster deployment through the decade.

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[1] *Source*:

Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics (DUKES) 2010

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

Equal Pay

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities when she plans to announce her decision on the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 provisions relating to gender pay information. [28929]

Lynne Featherstone: The Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) announced publication of the Government's equality strategy in a written ministerial statement on 2 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 87WS. The strategy includes a commitment to develop a voluntary approach on gender pay reporting in the private and voluntary sector. While we work with business and others to ensure this approach is successful, we will not commence, amend or repeal provisions in the Equality Act 2010 relating to gender pay information.

Public Sector: Disability

Jo Swinson: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities when she plans to bring forward proposals to provide additional support for people with disabilities who wish to become *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* councillors and *(c)* other elected officials. [29060]

Lynne Featherstone *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: We have made a commitment as part of our coalition document to introduce extra support for disabled people who want to become MPs, councillors or other elected officials. We hope to consult on proposals later this month with a wide range of organisations including disability organisations, political parties and other partner organisations. In devising the proposals, we have drawn on evidence collated by the cross-party Speakers' Conference, which reported in January 2010, with recommendations on increasing diversity in parliamentary representation.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMISSION

Public Accounts Committee

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission what National Audit Office resource was made available to support the work of the Public Accounts Committee in the latest period for which figures are available. [28460]

Mr Tyrie: In the 2009-10 financial year, the full cost of the National Audit Office supporting the work of the Public Accounts Committee, and in particular its consideration of the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General, was £2.082 million.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Training

Mr Chope: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what estimate has been made of the likely cost of the House of Commons tour guide training programme in 2010-11; what the duration of the course for each trainee is; what arrangements are in place for payment of trainees; and what the cost is of employing tour guides to substitute for those under training. [29405]

John Thurso: Following a detailed review of all aspects of visitor management at Parliament, an enhanced training and accreditation programme for in-house guides has been introduced as part of a package of measures designed to regularise and professionalise all aspects of guiding at Parliament.

The cost of the training programme will depend on the final number of participants, but were all of the 80 guides currently registered on the in-house guide list to undertake the training, it would cost a maximum of £34,186 gross. The costs are shared between the Commons and the Lords on a 70:30 basis, so the cost to the House of Commons would be £23,930.

The programme includes information about Parliament and the Palace, updates on developments in both Houses, and training in the mechanics of guiding and managing groups. Guides attend seven 90 minute training sessions, one longer communications seminar, and some practical tour sessions. In line with standard practice for House staff attending training, guides are not expected to undertake this training in their own time without recompense. Therefore, guides who also work at Parliament in another capacity either undertake training in work time with their line manager's agreement, or they undertake training outside of their other working hours, in which case they are paid for every 90 minutes of training at the rate of one tour (£34.29). It is not possible to give total costs as the training is still under way. The training sessions are being run more than once, to allow flexibility. Tours continue to run while the training programme is under way. Guides who are leading tours are taken from the existing pool while others are being trained.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts, in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28105]

Chris Grayling: The Department for Work and Pensions is fully engaged with Government initiatives to promote the use of small and medium sized enterprises (SME) and third sector organisations (TSO) and increase the level of business they get from Government. This business can be either direct, by winning departmental contracts, or indirect working as partners with or sub-contractors to the Department's prime contractors.

The Department is achieving the new Government commitment that 25% of contracts will be let to SMEs and in 2009-10 achieved 29%. The Department is also fully committed to using the new cross-Government pre-qualification questionnaire which is designed to simplify the tendering process for small and medium enterprises and will be launched in December 2010.

The Department's plans to encourage and support SMEs and TSOs form part of a wider approach set out in the DWP commercial strategy. This has objectives to make it easier for suppliers to compete for contracts and encourage a diverse supply base.

SMEs and TSOs are encouraged to contract with the Department, either as first tier suppliers, where capable, or as sub-contractors for more complex contracts. Part of the approach is to use the DWP supplier charter, signed by the department's top suppliers, which refers to extending its principles to SMEs as sub-contractors. Under the charter, larger suppliers are expected to use SMEs and voluntary organisations as sub-contractors, where it is appropriate, and brings definite added value for money.

A significant proportion of the Department's business with SME and TSOs is in welfare to work provision, where their specialist and local expertise can add great value. In preparing the market for the Work programme the Department has engaged with these organisations to gain their views and encourage them to become involved. It has taken steps to encourage potential prime contractors to come together with a range of partners and sub-contractors, particularly to use SMEs and TSOs where they could add value to bids. The Department will run local events to help prime contractors understand the needs and issues within each locality so they can put together appropriate supply chains for that area. The assessment of Work programme bidders will include a requirement to name all of their key sub-contractors and partners in their tenders and provide a letter of intent from each, this will allow assessment of SME and TSO involvement and the nature of their arrangements with the prime contractor. The department will expect its prime providers to gain accreditation of the Merlin Standard, to ensure provider supply chains are effective, high performing and that smaller organisations are treated appropriately and fairly. The Department recently won the Compact award for National Partnership Working, for development of the Merlin Standard, which demonstrates its commitment to stewardship of the welfare to work market, and equally the involvement and health of TSOs in prime provider led supply chains.

Each year the Department measures the number of SMEs and TSOs it has business with and the value of this business. In 2009-10 the Department had business with 5,039 SMEs, spending a total of £509 million with them, an increase of 18% over 2008-09. In 2009-10 the Department had business with 1,421 TSOs, spending a total of £305 million with them, an increase of 15% over 2008-09. Currently, some 30% of welfare to work provider sub-contracts are with voluntary sector organisations. The Department therefore has a strong record of encouraging, supporting and using SME and TSOs to support its business, either as direct contractors or as sub-contractors in supply chains. Current plans are expected to improve on this record.

Employment Schemes: Incapacity Benefits

Grahame M. Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the merits of allowing incapacity benefit claimants to access elements of the Work Programme; and if he will make a statement. [19237]

Chris Grayling: The Work Programme will support a wide range of customers—from jobseeker's allowance recipients who have been out of work for some time, to customers who may previously have been receiving incapacity benefits for many years. We intend to give all customers in receipt of employment support allowance the opportunity to access the Work Programme, on either a voluntary or a mandatory basis—depending on their circumstances.

However, we do not believe it would be appropriate to refer customers in receipt of incapacity benefit to the Work Programme until we have carried out a work capability assessment to properly establish their support needs.

Employment: Ex-servicemen

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to issue guidance to local councils on assistance for veterans to enter employment. [25704]

Chris Grayling: The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has no plans to issue guidance to local councils on assistance for veterans to enter employment.

Jobcentre Plus has armed forces champions in every Jobcentre Plus district who liaise with local authority forces champions and other local stakeholders on employment related issues.

Housing Benefit

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average eligible rent for claimants of housing benefit *(a)* in receipt of passport benefit, *(b)* not in receipt of passport benefit, *(c)* of working age, *(d)* of pension age, *(e)* in a regulated private tenancy and *(f)* in a deregulated private sector tenancy and (i) claiming and (ii) not claiming local housing allowance was in (A) April 2007 and (B) November 2008. [29407]

Steve Webb: Information is not available on amounts of weekly eligible rents for November 2008.

The Department does collect information on weekly eligible rents from the housing benefit/council tax benefit data Source (SHBE) but to assess the completeness of recording and quality assure the figures to answer this PQ would incur a disproportionate cost.

Housing benefit caseload and average weekly amounts are available at local authority area level and these are published on the Department's website at:

http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=hbctb

The information we have as at May 2007 is shown in the following table.

Average weekly amounts of eligible rents, Great Britain, May 2007

	£
Average weekly eligible rent for working age claimants	83.44
Average weekly eligible rent for Elderly claimants	65.62
Average weekly eligible rent for private regulated tenants	69.32
Average weekly eligible rent for private deregulated tenants	103.13
Average weekly eligible rent for local housing allowance tenants	n/a
Average weekly eligible rent for claimants receiving a passported benefit	75.65
Average weekly eligible rent for claimants not receiving a passported benefit	80.01

Source:

Housing benefit and council tax benefit management information system quarterly 100% data taken in February, May, August and November.

Marginal Deductions

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the average marginal deduction rate for each decile of the population *(a)* in 2010-11 and *(b)* following the implementation of the proposed universal credit under the assumptions contained in the White Paper on welfare reform. [26639]

Chris Grayling: Presenting average marginal deduction rates by income decile is potentially misleading as it groups together many different family types, with differing circumstances and treatment under the tax and benefit system, into specific groups.

As such, this Government have followed the same approach as the previous Administration in setting out the number of families that face high marginal deduction rates by marginal deduction rate bands, and would view this as providing a clearer picture of the impacts of the tax and benefit system on families than presenting averages by decile. Details of estimates in 2010-11 and 2011-12 can be found in Table A3 in Annex A of the June Budget. Additionally, in the White Paper 'Universal Credit: Welfare That Works', estimates have been provided under the universal credit system. Refer to Table 1 and Table 2 on pages 54 and 55 for further details.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of individuals who will have marginal deduction rates of *(a)* 61 to 70 per cent., *(b)* 71 to 80 per cent., *(c)* 81 to 90 per cent. and *(d)* 91 to 100 per cent. in each of the next five years. [26640]

Chris Grayling: The Government's recent White Paper, 'Universal Credit: Welfare That Works', shows marginal deduction rates for people in receipt of income-related benefits, tax credits or universal credit, separating earners above and below the tax and national insurance threshold.

Earning below the tax threshold

Million

Marginal deduction rate for non-taxpaying earners in receipt of IRBs/TCs or universal credit	*Current system*	*Universal credit*	*Difference*
Up to 60%	0.3	0.1	-0.3
60% to 70%	0.0	0.5	0.5
70% to 80%	0.0	0.0	0.0
80% to 90%	0.1	0.0	-0.1
Over 90%	0.1	0.0	-0.1

Earning above the tax threshold

Million

Marginal deduction rate for taxpaying earners in receipt or IRBs/TCs or universal credit	*Current system*	*Universal credit*	*Difference*
Up to 60%	0.9	0.8	0.0
60% to 70%	0.2	0.4	0.2
70% to 80%	1.7	2.0	0.3
80% to 90%	0.4	0.0	-0.4
Over 90%	0.1	[1]—	-0.1

[1] Denotes fewer than 50,000 people; figures may not sum due to rounding.

If we consider all working-age individuals, rather than just those on income-related benefits and tax credits or the universal credit, then we estimate that one million households will face a marginal deduction rate of 61% to 70% and two million will face a marginal deduction rate of 71% to 80% under universal credit.

It is important to note, as set out in the spending review, that presenting analysis far into the future may not be representative of the impact of future Government policy, and would not, for example, take into account the aim to increase the personal allowance to £10,000—a reform which will tend to reduce marginal deduction rates for lower earners.

After the introduction of the universal credit there will be a number of years of transition as existing cases migrate to the new system and as such it is not possible to produce estimates of the marginal deduction rates during this transition period.

Estimating marginal deduction rates within the current tax and benefit system is the responsibility of HM Treasury and it would incur a disproportionate cost to provide marginal deduction rates for all individuals for the intervening years between now and the introduction of the universal credit in 2013. However, Table A3 in Annex A of the June Budget set out the Government's estimates of marginal deduction rates in 2010-11 and 2011-12 following the implementation of June Budget measures. This is for working heads of families who are in receipt of income-related benefits or tax credits, where at least one person works 16 hours or more a week, and the head of the family is not receiving pensioner or disability premiums.

Nanotechnology: Safety

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps the Health and Safety Executive is taking to reduce the health risk to the public from nano-silver in consumer hygiene products. [23003]

Chris Grayling: Presently HSE has no specific activities on nano-silver in consumer hygiene products. Such disinfectants are not subject to the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986, and do not have to be authorised under national legislation implementing the Biocidal Products Directive (98/8/EC) pending completion of an EU review of the active substances in such products. Sweden is rapporteur for the nano-silver reviews, and is due to report its findings to the Commission and other member states on 31 March 2011.

Presently such disinfectants are subject to the Consumer Protection Act 1987, which is administered by BIS and enforced by trading standards officers. Such products may also be subject the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations 2009 and to EC Regulation 1272/2008 on classification labelling and packaging which, for consumer products, are also enforced by trading standards officers.

There is no general ban on nano-silver products under the Biocidal Products Directive. However, EU legislation on biocides required industry to indicate which active substances they wished to support through the review. Where active substances have not been supported for specific uses, products containing these active substances should have been removed from the market. Removal in these circumstances is most likely to reflect commercial decisions and not health and safety concerns. Where HSE has been made aware that specific products may be unlawfully on the market it has taken action, usually by alerting trading standards officers.

Pensions: Reform

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to combine the replacement SERPs scheme with the graduated pension payment scheme to create a single pension scheme; what assessment he has made of the effects of implementation of his proposals on pension reform on women who do not have a full record of national insurance contributions at the point of their retirement; what plans he has for the future of means-testing on pension entitlements; and if he will make a statement. [27092]

Steve Webb: The Government are currently considering a number of options for simplifying the state pension system but final decisions have not yet been made.

Social Security Benefits

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will take steps to simplify the processes involved in applying for benefits; and if he will make a statement. [27086]

Chris Grayling: Universal credit will replace working tax credit, child tax credit, housing benefit, income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance and income-related employment and support allowance. By using the best data technology available, we will streamline the system to improve efficiency, reduce administration costs and minimise the opportunities for fraud and errors at the same time. This will make it easier for people to see they will be consistently and transparently better off for each hour they work.

Social Security Benefits: Ex-servicemen

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of his Department's budget is allocated to programmes for veterans. [25775]

Chris Grayling: The information requested is not available in the format requested. Such information as is available is as follows.

While the Department for Work and Pensions does not have any bespoke programmes in place for veterans, a number of flexibilities that specifically favour veterans are available. For example, where appropriate, ex-armed forces and spouses of serving armed forces personnel are given early access to employment programmes.

Jobcentre Plus has also appointed a named armed forces champion in every Jobcentre Plus district. These champions liaise with local regular and reservist units, providing employment and training advice and guidance for both forces.

It is not possible to say what proportion of the department's budget is spent on veterans, as this information is not available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Social Security Benefits: Fraud

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has accrued to the Exchequer in recouped benefit payments after convictions for benefit fraud in each of the last five years. [17442]

Chris Grayling: We are not able to provide data on how much money has been recovered from people that have been convicted of benefit fraud as they are not classified as a distinct category in our debt recovery systems.

The Department published a new fraud and error strategy on 18 October 2010. The strategy sets out the Department's plans for improving the effectiveness of the current recoveries system which include increasing by around 25% the rate at which we recover fraud debts by deduction from benefit, introduction of powers to deduct money directly from an employee's earnings and in the most serious cases seeking court orders to seize a person's assets or force them to sell their houses to repay their fraud debt.

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria he plans to use to determine whether benefit claimants have deliberately not informed the relevant agency of a change in circumstances. [19837]

Chris Grayling: Where a customer deliberately does not inform the Department of a reportable change in circumstance this would constitute benefit fraud. The Fraud Investigation Service investigate cases thoroughly, and an admission of fraud or proof beyond reasonable doubt are the criteria used to determine whether fraud has been committed.

In cases where there is no fraudulent intent on behalf of the customer and a change in circumstance went unreported as a genuine mistake, the case would be referred to customer compliance.

The Department takes fraud very seriously and has recently published a new joint strategy with HMRC for tackling welfare fraud and error. This sets out a strong sanctions regime to punish those who are caught of committing benefit fraud and includes a new civil penalty for genuine mistakes.

Social Security Benefits: Illegal Immigrants

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate his Department has made of his Department's expenditure on welfare payments to illegal immigrants in the last 12 months. [24952]

Chris Grayling: No such estimate has been made.

Welfare State

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he plans to take to increase efficiency within the administration of the benefits system; whether he has considered the merits of gathering customer feedback to inform decision-making on efficiency measures; and if he will make a statement. [27088]

Chris Grayling: We are creating a new universal credit which will replace working tax credit, child tax credit, housing benefit, income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance and income-related employment and support allowance. The new benefit will transform service standards in welfare systems leading to a significant reduction in administration costs and better value for money for the taxpayer.

We intend to seek the views of current benefit and tax credit recipients at various stages in the development of the new service.

Work Capability Assessment Programme

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what mechanism he plans to put in place to measure work incentives under the new work capability assessment programme. [26994]

Chris Grayling: The work capability assessment is an objective medical assessment of someone's functional capability for work and is used to determine entitlement to employment and support allowance. It assesses an individual's capability for work by looking at their ability to carry out a range of physical and mental, cognitive and intellectual functions, and looks at how these are affected by a health condition or disability.

By accurately assessing someone's capability for work, we can better identify the right support to help them return to suitable work or prepare for a return to work, where possible. However, the WCA in isolation is not designed to incentivise work.

DEFENCE

Aircraft Carriers

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish the data used to determine that the aircraft carrier contract was more expensive to cancel than it was to complete. [28536]

Dr Fox *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: The Government's decision on the carrier programme was based on an assessment of a number of options and their financial, capability and industrial implications. This covered, among other things, our financial liabilities under relevant contracts and industrial agreements, including the so-called "Yellow Book". The Government have already published advice received from BAE Systems and will shortly be releasing redacted copies of the contract for the Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carrier Project and the BAE Systems Surface Ships Terms of Business Agreement for consideration by the Public Accounts Committee.

Armed Forces Covenant Task Force

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to publish the report of the Armed Forces Covenant Task Force. [28533]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: The independent Armed Forces Covenant Taskforce report, produced by Professor Hew Strachan, has been published today.

Armed Forces: Drugs

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether soldiers in the Army have their urine samples tested for mephedrone. [27724]

Mr Robathan: The Army drug testing programme does not currently include a specific bulk test for mephedrone. However, the programme of tests does detect a number of substances, some of which may include variants of mephedrone or its component parts. In addition to the Army drug testing programme, the Army has taken proactive measures to ensure that the dangers of mephedrone are addressed through a programme of education.

Armed Forces: Mental Health Services

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much funding his Department plans to allocate to *(a)* long-term care and *(b)* mental health care for veterans in addition to funding announced prior to the comprehensive spending review in each year of the spending review period. [28193]

Mr Robathan: The NHS is responsible for funding health care for veterans.

The Ministry of Defence is working closely with the Department of Health to implement the recommendations of the report into mental health care for serving personnel and veterans by the hon. Member for South West Wiltshire (Dr Murrison).

Armed Forces: Pensions

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will assess the potential effects of changing the inflation measure used to up-rate pensions from the retail price index to the consumer price index on the pension of a private aged 20 years who has suffered injuries and has received compensation at the top level of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme in each of the next five years. [29058]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: No assessment can be made as the retail price index and consumer price index rates are not known.

Combined Cadet Force

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department spent on cadet force activities in each year from 2001-02 to 2009-10. [27710]

Mr Robathan: Figures relating to expenditure on cadet force activities are held centrally only for the years 2007-08 and 2009-10. This amounts to £141 million and £146 million respectively. Information relating to the other years could be obtained only by conducting a manual search of records on multiple sites thus incurring a disproportionate cost.

Defence Procurement

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department has estimated how much it plans to spend with UK suppliers in each year to 2014-15. [26859]

Mr Robathan: The Ministry of Defence has estimated that we will spend around £50 billion on equipment and support over the next four years.

Departmental Art Works

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his most recent estimate in of the annual cost to the public purse of insurance for the fine art and antiques held on his Department's estates. [27829]

Mr Robathan: In common with other Defence fixed assets, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) art collection is not insured. The risk of damage or loss is accepted by the Government. Neither are further insurance policies covering fine art or antiques owned by MOD arranged centrally. Other non-departmental art collections may be held on Defence estates by messes, regiments or other groups; these are not owned by the MOD and insurance arrangements are the responsibility of the owners.

Departmental Finance

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department spent on *(a)* recruitment materials *(b)* schools visits and *(c)* other outreach programmes for people under the age of 18 years in each financial year from 2001-02 and 2009-10. [27711]

Mr Robathan: We do not account separately in our recruitment effort for those under the age of 18 years. However, we have been able to identify some costs incurred by the Army for the year 2006 onwards. Data in respect of the other two services are not held in the form requested and could be obtained only through a search of records and invoices that would incur a disproportionate cost.

The following table lists expenditure relating to recruitment materials, school visits and other outreach programmes conducted by the Army since 1 April 2006:

£

	Recruitment materials	*School visits*	*Other outreach programmes*
2006-07	1,942,000	n/a	301,000
2007-08	2,058,000	237,000	670,000
2008-09	1,361,000	191,000	758,000
2009-10	2,615,000	155,000	698,000

n/a = Not available

Note:

All figures rounded to the nearest £000.

Departmental Sponsorship

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what expenditure *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [27519]

Mr Robathan: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate costs. The main sponsorship activities that are covered by the Ministry of Defence are sports and educational outreach.

Ex-servicemen: Radiation Exposure

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reason his Department has not compensated nuclear test veterans for the adverse effects on their health arising from their participation in nuclear tests. [28427]

Mr Robathan: Well-documented formal procedures were in place to ensure the health and safety of those participating in the tests. The majority of nuclear test veterans (NTVs) received little or no additional radiation exposure as a result of participation. We believe there is no evidence of excess illness or mortality among NTVs which can be linked to their participation in the tests or their exposure to radiation as a result of that participation, with the exception of certain leukaemias.

Compensation in the form of a war pension is available to all former members of HM armed forces who suffer disablement which is attributable to service prior to 6 April 2005 including nuclear test veterans. The scheme also makes provision for the widows and widowers of service and ex-service personnel whose death is attributable to service in the form of a war widows/widowers pension. Individuals can and do appeal to an independent appeals tribunal if they are unhappy with a particular decision.

Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department has taken to comply with the direction of the War Pensions Tribunal to disclose all documents relating to nuclear test veterans' exposure to ionising radiation by 30 November 2010; and what progress it has made in complying with the direction of the Tribunal to *(a)* search for and *(b)* disclose all documents relevant to nuclear test veteran compensation claims by that date. [29011]

Mr Robathan: There have been an unusually high number of complex requests for classified information and documents in the current group of war pensions appeals cases. The Ministry of Defence continues to work closely with the War Pensions Tribunal to find proportionate and cost-effective ways of ensuring that all relevant documents are disclosed and to meet the timescales set out in the judge's latest set of directions. Special security arrangements have been agreed with the tribunal to ensure appropriate handling of any highly classified documents.

Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will review his Department's policy on causal links between exposure to radiation during nuclear testing it carried out in the 1950s and the onset of cancer and other illnesses in test veterans against policies on similar circumstances adopted by his international counterparts. [29012]

Mr Robathan: There are no plans to review the policy on causal links. The Ministry of Defence policy on causal links between exposure to radiation during the UK atmospheric nuclear tests and the onset of cancer and other illnesses is in line with generally accepted contemporary scientific and medical understanding based on the published peer-reviewed international literature. The policy requires ongoing routine scrutiny of the literature to detect and as appropriate reflect new and emerging evidence.

Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what benchmarking assessment his Department has made of the provisions for nuclear test veteran compensation under the US Radiation Exposure Compensation Act. [29013][1]

Mr Robathan: No benchmarking has taken place.

In the United Kingdom evidence was provided in the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) reports of the three follow-up studies on the health of over 20,000 nuclear test participants and a matched group of military controls. For the United States atomic veterans no comparable large scale epidemiological US study was carried out.

The Ministry of Defence also provides pensions automatically to nuclear test veterans who have one of a list of 22 cancers presumed to be causally linked to service. For other cancers, claims may be accepted on the basis of calculated radiation exposure assessment. In the US, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) will pay a one time lump sum of 75,000 US dollars for cancers on their own list.

Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many medical records of nuclear test veterans his Department have identified for further post mortem research. [29014]

Mr Robathan: The Ministry of Defence has not identified any medical records of nuclear test veterans for further post mortem research.

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of his action at the War Pensions Tribunal in respect of nuclear test veterans; and if he will make a statement. [27983]

Mr Robathan: To date the Ministry of Defence (MOD) has been notified of bills totalling some £150,000 (including VAT) for work associated with defending the civil action.

This figure does not include the cost of any associated MOD staff effort.

It is difficult to estimate future costs at this stage for the current group of war pensions appeals as these are dependent on the case put forward by the appellants and the judge's future directions.

We remain keen to work with the tribunal and appellants with a view to ensuring that costs relating to all war pensions appeals are proportionate and kept to a minimum.

Korea: Politics and Government

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has had recent discussions with the US administration on its operations in the Korean peninsula. [27827]

Dr Fox: The Secretary of State for Defence has not had direct contact with the US Administration on this issue, but Ministry of Defence and Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials maintain strong contacts with our US and Republic of Korea (ROK) allies and regularly discuss regional issues, including the recent exchange of artillery fire between North Korea and ROK.

Military Aircraft

Karen Lumley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* BAe 146 and *(b)* BAe 125 aircraft were sold by his Department in each year since 2003; and how much revenue was raised from each sale. [26926]

Mr Robathan: No BAe 146 aircraft have been sold by the Ministry of Defence since 2003. Five BAe 125 aircraft were sold in 2007 for a total of just under £30,000.

Morocco: Military Exercises

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what occasions UK and Moroccan defence agencies have participated in joint exercises *(a)* bilaterally and *(b)* as members of collective security organisations since 1997. [28438]

Mr Robathan: The UK undertakes modest, but important annual bilateral defence activity with Morocco. Our bi-lateral joint exercises since 1997 to date have been as follows:

Ex Jebel Saharah: a very successful bilateral ground and airmobile annual exercise which is run in the Marrakech region has now been run 10 times since its inception in 2000.

Ex Jebel Tarik: Morocco has contributed service personnel to this annual bilateral deployment of two companies (up to 180 personnel) of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment (RG) to the UK, on seven occasions since 2003.

Ex Desert Vortex: a one-off bilateral helicopter exercise which was run between 16 May and 30 June 2009. This was a UK training exercise with objectives set by Joint Helicopter Command (JHC) and run concurrently with Moroccan Air Force annual helicopter crew training.

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[1] *[Official Report, 18 January 2011, Vol. 521, c. 7MC.]*

The UK and Moroccan Defence agencies have not participated in any joint exercises as members of collective security organisations since 1997.

HMS Northumberland was due to take part in the NATO Standing Naval Maritime Group 1 (SNMG 1) staging in Casablanca in September 2010. Unfortunately, UK participation did not materialize as HMS Northumberland had to be re-tasked and did not visit Morocco.

NATO

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contribution the UK made to the US and Estonian Joint NATO exercise in October 2010; and if he will make a statement. [27111]

Mr Gerald Howarth: There were no US and Estonian joint NATO exercises in this period. I assume the hon. Member refers to the non-NATO exercise Sabre Strike which took place in Latvia from 18 to 31 October 2010. Members of the armed forces from the US, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania took part. The UK made no contribution.

Nimrod Aircraft

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what account he took of the increased capacity of the Nimrod MRA4 in determining the future size of the Nimrod fleet; and if he will make a statement. [28414]

Peter Luff: The strategic defence and security review took account of the Nimrod MRA4's range of capabilities. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 28 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 450-51W, to the hon. Member for East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow (Mr McCann), the right hon. Member for Coventry North East (Mr Ainsworth) and the hon. Member for North Durham (Mr Jones).

Trident Value for Money Review

Mr Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the Trident value for money review. [20480]

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish the Trident replacement value for money review. [21143]

Tessa Munt: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) on what date he expects to present to Parliament the full results of the Trident value for money report; [20721]

(2) if he will ensure that Parliament is given the opportunity to review the Trident value for money report and the strategic defence and security review before any contracts for the Future Submarine programme are placed. [20850]

Dr Fox *[holding answer 3 November 2010]*: The value for money review's outcomes were published as part of the strategic defence and security review.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture: Finance

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the amount of funding from the public purse received by the farming industry from *(a)* UK and *(b)* EU sources in each year since 1997-98. [28798]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: The following table shows the funds provided to farmers less levies in £ million. While the majority of funding is from the EU, the precise EU/UK split is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The fact the UK contributes to the EU budget further blurs the line between EU and UK funding sources.

	£ million
1997	2,773
1998	2,639
1999	2,684
2000	2,474
2001	2,445
2002	2,665
2003	2,758
2004	2,945
2005	3,030
2006	3,028
2007	3,015
2008	3,293
2009	3,644

Source:
Agriculture in the United Kingdom

Angling

Mr Marcus Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of progress in the *(a)* protection and *(b)* improvement of coarse and non-migratory trout fisheries. [28326]

Richard Benyon: Course and non-migratory trout fisheries are protected under various legislative measures. Under the Environment Act 1995, the Environment Agency (EA) has a statutory duty to "maintain, improve and develop fisheries for salmon, trout, eels, lampreys, smelt and freshwater fish". In addition there are UK obligations under the European habitats directive that covers several freshwater species and habitats. Continued and effective management of fisheries is essential to defining and achieving "good ecological status" as required in the water framework directive.

In general the status of non-migratory freshwater fish stocks is encouraging. Coarse fish numbers are increasing and are a big improvement on two decades ago, when many rivers were heavily polluted, with fish communities restricted in distribution and numbers. Many non-migratory trout are caught in put-and-take fisheries on still waters, and improvements to these depend largely upon local stocking policies. Wild non-migratory brown trout are the same species as migratory brown trout and the juveniles cannot be distinguished, and so it is not possible to assess their status independently.

Regular monitoring is undertaken to help identify where improvements to fish populations are required and where additional protection is needed to prevent them from deteriorating.

Animal Welfare: Inspections

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many welfare inspections by Animal Health were carried out on rabbit farms in 2009; and what level of compliance with animal welfare legislation and the welfare code was recorded as a result of such inspections. [28794]

Mr Paice: Animal Health does not conduct routine welfare inspections of rabbit farms as there is no specific requirement to register rabbit farms with Animal Health or the Rural Payments Agency. However, Animal Health will conduct a welfare inspection if they receive a complaint or allegation about poor welfare and when a targeted, or follow up visit is required. In 2009 Animal Health recorded three incidences where the level of compliance with animal welfare legislation resulted in a failure.

Badgers: Bovine Tuberculosis

Gordon Birtwistle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what tests her Department carries out to ensure that badgers culled to prevent the spread of bovine tuberculosis carry the virus. [28687]

Mr Paice: We are currently consulting on a proposal for badger control to tackle bovine TB. The consultation period ends on 8 December. No decisions have yet been taken.

In theory, the ideal culling strategy would be selective, i.e. only infected badgers would be culled. However, no diagnostic test is both sufficiently sensitive and suitable for use in the field, so a policy of selective culling is not currently being pursued.

Given the extent of evidence already available on the prevalence of bovine tuberculosis in the badger population, we do not propose in the current consultation to post mortem culled badgers to check whether individual badgers were infected with *Mycobacterium bovis*.

Badgers: Disease Control

Gordon Birtwistle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she plans to take to reduce the number of badger culls. [28549]

Mr Paice: We are currently consulting on a proposal for badger control to tackle bovine TB. The consultation period ends on 8 December. No decisions have yet been taken.

As stated in the consultation document, we would not want to see culling for longer than is necessary and would intend to review how the policy is working after four years.

Common Fisheries Policy

Ms Ritchie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on the scope for devolution of powers under the review of the common fisheries policy. [29151]

Richard Benyon: We will continue to call for genuine, radical reform of the common fisheries policy, to overcome its current serious structural failings. This means replacing ineffective, centralised micro-management with simplified and de-centralised decision making, enabling those closest to fisheries to plan for the long term, and allowing fishermen to take responsibility for prosperous and sustainable fishing operations.

Ms Ritchie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent progress has been made on the review of the common fisheries policy. [29207]

Richard Benyon: The EU Commission's 2009 Green Paper provides a compelling case for fundamental reform of the current common fisheries policy; changes that simplify and decentralise fisheries management, enabling those closest to fisheries to plan for the long-term, and giving fishermen greater incentive to fish sustainably. We expect the Commission to publish draft proposals next spring.

We are working with other member states, and interested parties, to build support for genuine, radical reform ahead of negotiations next year.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she has taken since her appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within her responsibility. [28355]

Richard Benyon: In response to the arrangements for advertising and marketing put in place by the Government, my Department has established an internal panel to consider all proposals for expenditure arising from communication activity.

As a result of the panel's work, planned expenditure on all elements of communication has been substantially reduced.

Approval has been given to expenditure on seven conferences. Five were approved following reduction in costs requested by the panel. Two were accepted by the panel without change. The total cost of the seven conferences was £34,285.

Departmental Manpower

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many agency workers her Department and its agencies employ at each pay grade. [28503]

Richard Benyon: In line with Government policy, this Department and its executive agencies have and will continue to reduce the number of temporary agency staff used. Central records on numbers in the core Department and executive agencies will vary daily as reductions are implemented.

Manual processes have been introduced in the core Department to record the number of non-permanent staff deployed at the end of each month and at the end of October 2010, there were 145. These processes will be moving to quarterly from December 2010. This number includes temporary staff, contractors, interims and some specialist consultants. The pay grade is not yet recorded in all records. Introduction of similar processes in executive agencies is being reviewed.

Fisheries: Jobseeker's Allowance

Ms Ritchie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on future provision for fishermen in any revisions to rules governing jobseeker's allowance. [29245]

Richard Benyon: No discussions have been had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, my right hon. Friend the Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Mr Duncan Smith) on future provision for fishermen in any revisions to rules governing jobseeker's allowance.

Flood Control: Local Government

Ian Mearns: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 24 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 39-40WS, on the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy (England), what discussions her Department is having with local government representatives to discuss the funding of new burdens placed on councils under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010; [29414]

(2) what steps the Government is taking to ensure that new burdens placed on councils under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 are fully funded; [29415]

(3) what progress has been made by the DEFRA/LGA Joint Legislative Implementation Panel on identifying and resolving the concerns of local authorities in relation to funding for the requirements placed on them under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010; [29416]

(4) what requirements have been placed on local authorities under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010; and what steps the Government is taking to ensure that such requirements are cost neutral for local councils. [29417]

Richard Benyon: We remain committed to fully funding new local authority burdens under the Flood and Water Management Act, and to ensuring a fair outcome for both local authorities and the taxpayer. £36 million a year will be provided directly to lead local flood authorities (£21 million in 2011-12 due to phasing-in) through area based grant. The Government have set up a joint implementation review panel with the Local Government Association. This independently chaired panel meets regularly and recently commissioned a survey of local authority preparations for implementation of the Act.

Forestry: Grants

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has assessed the merits of making grants to ensure that privately-owned forests and natures reserves are managed appropriately to maintain their benefits to the public. [28767]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) runs from 2007-13 and is designed to support agri-environment and other land management schemes. We are currently undertaking a Mid Term Evaluation that includes an assessment of the effectiveness of the funding which is made available to forestry owners and other land managers to encourage management practices that deliver public benefits. We will publish the Mid Term Evaluation of the RDPE in the new year.

Payments are currently made to private owners of national nature reserves in two main ways: through statutory agreements on the land between Natural England and the landowner; and/or through an Environmental Stewardship agreement.

Landowners receiving funding support under either of these approaches must agree to undertake specific actions that will deliver the agreed public benefits such as: community engagement, access, education, and research as well as nature conservation. These benefits go over and beyond statutory requirements or cross-compliance with wider schemes such as the Single Farm Payment. The required actions are set out in a management plan or agreement for the land. The provision of payments is subject to compliance with this plan or agreement.

Quantification of these widespread merits is difficult. However, we have commissioned a study, which we expect to report in the new year, to estimate the benefits to society of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (which include national nature reserves); quantifying them where possible.

Hemp

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had on the promotion of hemp crop trials. [29418]

Mr Paice: I have not been involved in any discussions on the promotion of hemp crop trials. Nevertheless, I do wish to see hemp cultivation expand in the UK, capturing the environmental and sustainability benefits the crop can provide and keeping the UK at the forefront of the development of new, high-value end uses for the crop.

Hydrofluorocarbons

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her most recent estimate is of the contribution which will have been made to global warming by hydrofluorocarbons previously used as refrigerants by 2050. [28804]

Richard Benyon *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* A study undertaken by AEA Technology on behalf of DEFRA and the Department for Energy and Climate Change considers the use and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons in the UK in all sectors where emissions occur. This study revalidates and updates historic consumption, and provides an estimate of emissions through to 2050. The report is available from the DEFRA website at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/air/fgas/background.htm#publications

Incinerators

Andrew Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for incineration as part of her waste management policy. [27994]

Richard Benyon: The Government's approach to waste management is underpinned by the waste hierarchy, which ranks waste management methods in order of environmental preference. For waste that cannot be prevented, re-used or recycled, recovery of energy is a preferable alternative, and recovering energy from waste is almost always preferable to landfill (unless analysis of the overall environmental impact for specific types of waste shows otherwise).

The waste hierarchy will shortly become law through the revised Waste Framework Directive, which seeks to promote waste prevention, increase recycling, and ensure better use of resources, while protecting human health and the environment. Recovery of energy from waste, including but not limited to incineration, has a role to play in managing waste according to the hierarchy.

A full review of waste policy is currently being carried out, with initial findings due in spring 2011. The role of recovering energy from waste, including incineration, will be considered as part of the review.

Marine Scotland

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Scottish Executive on issues relating to the ownership and burdens of roads 12, 18 and 19 in the Almondbank complex consequent on the proposed closure of Marine Scotland: Science in March 2011. [29391]

Richard Benyon: DEFRA and Scottish Government officials met on 26 November 2010 to discuss the legal title of the roadways serving Scottish Executive's retained land. Discussions are ongoing and Scottish Executive colleagues are continuing to consult their legal advisers on the legal title.

US Military Bases

Caroline Nokes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the potential health risks arising from the consumption of food products that do not conform to EU regulations on US military bases in the UK. [27962]

Anne Milton: I have been asked to reply.

In terms of food safety and food hygiene the United States conforms to high standards, and US requirements are broadly comparable with European Union food regulations. Food imported from the US for consumption at US military bases is subject to EU border controls, and the perceived risk to human health, from consumption at military bases or in the wider community, is judged to be negligible. For that reason an assessment of the health risks has not been conducted.

Caroline Nokes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will assess the risks to public health from the provision of US military food supplies via warehouses *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* in Germany. [27963]

Anne Milton: I have been asked to reply.

Where consignments originating from the United States are destined for NATO or US bases different procedures apply depending on the location of the warehouse of destination.

If the warehouse of destination is not on the NATO or US base but on European Union/European Economic Area territory (which is the case for all bases in the United Kingdom), the consignment is treated the same as any other import to the EU. It must undergo veterinary checks at a border inspection post (BIP) to ensure that it meets all of the required animal and public health import conditions before it is released to its destination.

If the warehouse is located inside a NATO or US base in the EU (as may be the case in Germany), the consignment should be treated as a consignment in transit and must fulfil animal health requirements, including checks that it is accompanied by the appropriate animal health certification. The BIP will carry out a documentary and identity check, and transmit the relevant information to the competent authority responsible for the warehouse (the designated exit point from the EU). Subsequently the competent authority will confirm arrival of the consignment, which is not permitted to enter free circulation within the EU.

In addition, the US authorities publicise information on the rules for personal imports, of products of animal origin and plant and plant products, which may be posted to US personnel.

Office of Water Services

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost to the public purse of Ofwat has been in each year since its inception. [28988]

Richard Benyon: Ofwat's expenditure requirements are covered by licence fees recovered from the companies it regulates. There is no cost to the public purse.

Ofwat's resource accounts are published at:

http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/aboutofwat/reports/resourceaccounts

Recycling: Business

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to encourage businesses to recycle their waste. [27969]

Richard Benyon: DEFRA has recently published interim results from a survey of commercial and industrial waste in England, which indicate that the current rate of re-use and recycling of business waste is 58%, compared to 43% in the equivalent 2002 survey. These data sets are interim estimates and are subject to change. The final survey results are planned to be published on Thursday 16 December.

The Government are carrying out a review of waste policies in England, due to be completed in spring 2011, and that review is looking at ways of encouraging further improvements in waste prevention and recycling by businesses, including SMEs, for example by exploring voluntary responsibility deals with particular business sectors.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

European Arrest Warrant: Dr Daniel Ubani

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Attorney-General whether *(a)* the Crown Prosecution Service, *(b)* Cambridgeshire constabulary and *(c)* any other Government Department notified the German authorities of an intention to serve a European arrest warrant in respect of Dr Daniel Ubani prior to 12 March 2010. [29428]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General is only responsible for the actions of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). There was no communication by the CPS with the German authorities, in advance of 12 March 2009, regarding an intention to submit a European arrest warrant. The CPS have no record of any contacts made in this matter by other public bodies.

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Attorney-General pursuant to the answer of 25 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 64W, on European arrest warrant: Dr Daniel Ubani, whether the European arrest warrant received by the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) on 9 March 2009 was *(a)* sent to or *(b)* drawn to the attention of the German authorities by (i) the Crown Prosecution Service, (ii) SOCA, (iii) another Government Department and (iv) any other organisation or individual. [29429]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General is only responsible for the actions of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). There was no communication by the CPS with the German authorities regarding the European arrest warrant (EAW) dated 9 March 2009. The CPS have no record of any communication made with the German authorities in this matter by other public bodies, organisations or individuals.

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Attorney-General pursuant to the answer of 1 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 498W, on Daniel Ubani, if he will place in the Library a copy of the German prosecutor's document which suggests that legal proceedings were initiated against Dr Ubani on 12 March 2009. [29431]

The Solicitor-General: The document referred to by the hon. Member is an official document from the German prosecutor to the German court. Given this, the German prosecutor's office would need to be consulted about the placing of the document in the Library. The CPS will contact the German prosecutor on this point.

Timber

Mr Bain: To ask the Attorney-General what assessment he has made of the compliance of *(a)* the Law Officers' Departments and *(b)* their agency with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber. [27857]

The Solicitor-General: The Law Officers Departments are committed to contracting suppliers through the Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions Framework and endeavour to ensure that wherever possible products are procured from sustainable sources in line with the UK Government's Timber Policy.

JUSTICE

Civil Proceedings: Legal Costs

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice which proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper require primary legislation to be implemented. [28969]

Mr Djanogly: As stated in the consultation paper 'Proposals for Reform of Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations', published on 15 November 2010, a number of the leading recommendations, particularly for reform of the conditional fee agreement regime and wider availability of damages-based agreements, would require primary legislation to be implemented. The primary legislation required will depend on the outcome of the consultation, and the Government will set out the legislation required in due course.

Discharge Grant: Uprating

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will bring forward proposals to increase the discharge grant by the rate of inflation each year. [29386]

Mr Blunt: There are currently no proposals to increase the discharge grant issued to prisoners on release from prison.

The provision of a lump sum discharge grant is not a very satisfactory way of meeting prisoners' immediate financial needs on release. The National Offender Management Service is working with the Department for Work and Pensions to identify the best way to address the prisoner finance gap.

Domestic Violence

Karl McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many people of each sex were *(a)* prosecuted and *(b)* convicted for domestic abuse offences in (i) Lincolnshire and (ii) England and Wales in (A) 2008-09 and (B) 2009-10. [29433]

Mr Blunt: Information collated centrally by the Ministry of Justice holds details on defendants proceeded against, found guilty and sentenced for criminal offences in England and Wales. It does not include the circumstances of each case or hold specific information on offences beyond descriptions provided by the statutes under which proceedings are brought. It is not possible to separately identify domestic violence offences from other offences of assault and violence against the person.

However, the Crown Prosecution Service has provided data relating to the number of persons proceeded against and found guilty in Lincolnshire and England and Wales for the prescribed periods. This information is as follows.

Crown Prosecution Service—defendants prosecuted for domestic violence crimes

(i) Table 1: CPS Lincolnshire

	2008-09					2009-10				
	Convictions		Unsuccessful			Convictions		Unsuccessful		
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Total prosecutions	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Total prosecutions
Female	25	67.6	12	32.4	37	28	84.8	5	15.2	33
Male	434	76.8	131	23.2	565	383	77.8	109	22.2	492
Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Total defendants	459	76.2	143	23.8	602	411	78.3	114	21.7	525

(ii) Table 2: England and Wales

	2008-09					2009-10				
	Convictions		Unsuccessful			Convictions		Unsuccessful		
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Total prosecutions	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Total prosecutions
Female	2,968	69.6	1,298	30.4	4,266	3,494	68.8	1,588	31.2	5,082
Male	45,484	72.4	17,321	27.6	62,805	49,843	72.2	19,176	27.8	69,019
Unknown	13	56.5	10	43.5	23	10	83.3	2	16.7	12
Total defendants	48,465	72.2	18,629	27.8	67,094	53,347	72.0	20,766	28.0	74,113

Land Registry

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what estimate he has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Land Registry in each of the next five years. [29000]

Mr Djanogly: As a trading fund Her Majesty's Land Registry is a self-funding organisation that is not funded by the public purse.

On 17 March Land Registry announced the outcome of a consultation on its Accelerated Transformation Programme. The figures published in the decisions report indicate the following savings over the next five years:

	£ million
2011-12	79
2012-13	80
2013-14	81
2014-15	94
2015-16	86

On 14 October it was announced that the Ministry of Justice would be carrying out a feasibility study into private sector involvement in Land Registry, with a range of options being considered. The outcome of the study will be announced in the new year.

Legal Aid: Asylum

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the effects of reductions in the legal aid budget on families seeking asylum; what plans he has to ensure that asylum-seeking families have access to high-quality legal advice early on in the process; and if he will make a statement. [29266]

Mr Djanogly: We propose to continue providing publicly funded legal assistance in asylum cases. We are also working with the UK Border Agency to help improve the quality of asylum decision-making by piloting the provision of legal advice earlier in the asylum process.

Offenders: Employment

Mr Charles Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will bring forward proposals to require the National Offender Management Service to track employment outcomes for offenders *(a)* six months and *(b)* one year after release as part of the payment by results system; and if he will make a statement. [29152]

Mr Blunt: The Department for Work and Pensions is launching a new approach to improving employment outcomes based on payment by results and has, jointly with the MoJ, set out its intention to incentivise Work programme providers to give employment support to unemployed offenders, including those leaving custody. We are exploring what data will be required as part of these plans.

Personal Injury

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many personal injury claims were brought against his Department and its agencies in each of the last three years. [28903]

Mr Djanogly: The information requested for the last three years is set out in the following table:

MOJ and agencies including NOMS, HMCS, Tribunals and OPG

	Number
2007-08	1,224
2008-09	1,593
2009-10	1,394

Personal Injury: Damages

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what recent representations he has received from the Law Commission on the level of general damages in personal injury claims; and what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of that level. [29031]

Mr Djanogly: I have not received any recent representations from the Law Commission on the level of general damages in personal injury claims. The assessment of the appropriate level of general damages is a matter for the courts to decide.

Prisoners

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many prisoners *(a)* of each sex and *(b)* in each age group received an indeterminate sentence for public protection in each month between December 2009 and November 2010 [29187]

Mr Blunt: The table shows the reception figures of prisoners on indeterminate sentences for public protection in all prison establishments in England and Wales in each month between December 2009 and June 2010 (latest date for which figures are available).

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Receptions of prisoners on indeterminate sentences for public protection, by sex and age group, December 2009 to June 2010

			Age group							
		All	*15 to 17*	*18 to 20*	*21 to 24*	*25 to 29*	*30 to 39*	*40 to 49*	*50 to 59*	*60 and over*
December 2009	Male	59	0	7	9	7	14	12	7	3
	Female	4	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0
January 2010	Male	43	1	4	10	9	6	9	3	1
	Female	3	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
February 2010	Male	39	4	3	6	3	11	11	0	[illegible]
	Female	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
March 2010	Male	68	0	5	13	17	8	13	11	1
	Female	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
April 2010	Male	60	2	8	8	5	17	15	4	1
	Female	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
May 2010	Male	60	3	6	15	8	14	9	4	1
	Female	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
June 2010	Male	49	0	4	11	6	16	9	3	0
	Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) how many prisoners serving an indeterminate sentence for public protection on 30 November 2010 were beyond a tariff of *(a)* two years or less, *(b)* three years of less, *(c)* four years or less and *(d)* five years or less; [29191]

(2) how many prisoners *(a)* of each sex and *(b)* in each age band were serving an indeterminate sentence for public protection on 30 November 2010; and how many had (i) exceeded their tariff and (ii) exceeded their tariff and had not completed an offenders' treatment programme. [29192]

Mr Blunt: On 17 November 2010 there were 6,375 offenders in custody (including those serving their sentence in secure mental hospitals) for an indeterminate sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) or Detention for Public Protection (DPP), of which 3,173 were past tariff (excluding offenders who have been recalled to custody).

Of the 3,173 offenders whose tariff had expired:

(a) 1,432 had a tariff of 730 days or less (approximately two years or less).

(b) 2,601 had a tariff of 1,095 days or less (approximately three years or less).

(c) 3,080 had a tariff of 1,460 days or less (approximately four years or less).

(d) 3,169 had a tariff of 1,825 days or less (approximately five years or less).

The following table presents a breakdown of the population of IPP and DPP prisoners by gender and age-group. This also excludes 41 where there was no tariff expiry date on the Public Protection Unit Database (PPUD) on the 17 November 2010. Of these, 36 offenders were sentenced in 2010.

	Men		*Women*		*Total*	
Age-group	*Total*	*Past tariff*	*Total*	*Past tariff*	*Total*	*Past tariff*
15-17	40	5	0	0	40	5
18-20	226	60	3	2	229	62
21-24	1,102	559	21	16	1,123	575
25-29	1,384	725	31	25	1,415	750
30-39	1,641	851	63	41	1,704	892
40-49	1,217	558	36	20	1,253	578
50-59	414	204	9	6	423	210
60 and over	186	100	2	1	188	101
Total	6,210	3,062	165	111	6,375	3,173

The figures above were taken from PPUD in the National Offender Management Service, and, as with any large scale recording system, it is subject to possible errors arising from either data entry or processing. PPUD is a live database, updated on a regular basis. As a result, snapshots taken on consecutive days will contain differences reflecting updates.

On 3 December 2010, there were 498 offenders who were past tariff and had not completed at least one programme, of which 455 were men and 43 were women. It should be noted that some of these offenders had started or started and not completed a programme. An age band (as at 17 November 2010) breakdown is presented in the able below. This information was taken from a database held by the Public Protection and Mental Health Group at the National Offender Management Service.

Current age	*Offender without a complete programme*
15-17	2
18-20	42
21-24	66
25-29	108
30-39	128
40-49	112
50-59	42
60 and over	28
Total	498

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) how many prisoners *(a)* of each sex and *(b)* in each age band serving indeterminate sentences for public protection have been released on licence in each year since 2005; [29257]

(2) how many prisoners *(a)* of each sex and *(b)* in each age band serving indeterminate sentences for public protection have been recalled to prison in each year since 2005. [29258]

Mr Blunt: The number of indeterminate sentence Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) or Detention for Public Protection (DPP) offenders released into the community by year of latest release broken down by gender (Table 1) and current age (Table 2) is presented in the following tables. These include offenders that have been recalled to custody but exclude those who have been deported. Please note that both tables exclude five men where the latest release date was not available.

Table 1: Offenders released (latest release) broken down by gender

Year of latest release	*Men*	*Women*	*Total*
2006	3	0	3
2007	7	3	10
2008	31	2	33
2009	53	1	54
2010	80	7	87
Total	174	13	187

Table 2: Offenders released (latest release) broken down by age band

Current age	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*Total*
15 to 17	0	0	0	0	0	0
18 to 20	0	0	0	0	1	1
21 to 24	1	1	8	10	13	33
25 to 29	1	2	10	14	34	61
30 to 39	0	1	8	17	15	41
40 to 49	0	5	5	10	14	34
50 to 59	0	1	1	1	5	8
60 and over	1	0	1	2	5	9
Total	3	10	33	54	87	187

The number of offenders recalled to prison by year of latest recall broken down by gender (Table 3) and current age (Table 4) is presented in the following tables. For offenders who have been recalled into custody more than once, only the latest recall was considered.

Table 3: Offenders recalled (latest recall) broken down by gender

Year of latest recall	*Men*	*Women*	*Total*
2007	2	0	2
2008	7	0	7
2009	14	2	16
2010	21	1	22
Total	44	3	47

Table 4: Offenders recalled (latest recall) broken down by age band

Current age	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*Total*
15 to 20	0	0	0	0	0
21 to 24	0	3	4	1	8
25 to 29	0	2	6	9	17
30 to 39	0	1	4	5	10
40 to 49	1	1	2	4	8
50 to 59	1	0	0	1	2
60 and over	0	0	0	2	2
Total	2	7	16	22	47

The figures above were taken from the Public Protection Unit Database (PPUD) in the National Offender Management Service, and, as with any large scale recording system, it is subject to possible errors arising from either data entry or processing. PPUD is a live database, updated on a regular basis. As a result, snapshots taken on consecutive days will contain differences reflecting updates.

Prisoners: Death

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) whether he has made an estimate of the number of prisoners who committed suicide within six months of their release from prison in each of the last five years; [29075]

(2) how many prisoners *(a)* in total and *(b)* aged 60 years or over died of natural causes in prison in each of the last five years. [29109]

Mr Blunt: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) systematically records deaths of inmates who are directly in its care. This covers deaths which occur while in direct prison custody or while released on temporary licence for medical reasons. Deaths of those in approved premises are also recorded. NOMS does not collect figures for the number of prisoners who committed suicide after release; that may or may not be under supervision. This information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The information requested in question two is displayed in table 1 as follows:

Table 1: Annual totals of natural causes deaths by age: 2005-09[1] England and Wales

	Apparent natural causes	
	All age bands	*60 and over*
2005	88	32
2006	83	34
2007	91	33
2008	99	41
2009	105	45

[1] From the safety in custody statistics 2010: www.justice.gov.uk/publications/safer-custody.htm

NOMS has a broad, integrated and evidence-based prisoner suicide prevention and self harm management strategy that seeks to reduce the distress of all those in prison. This encompasses a wide spectrum of Prison and Department of Health work around such issues as mental health, substance misuse and resettlement. Any prisoner identified as at risk of suicide or self-harm is cared for using the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) procedures.

Prisoners: Older People

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many prisoners aged 60 years or older there were in each of the last five years. [29110]

Mr Blunt: The following table provides the information requested on the number of prisoners aged 60 years or over in England and Wales as at 30 June in each year from 2006 to 2010.

	Number
2006	1,954
2007	2,213
2008	2,393
2009	2,539
2010	2,849

Note:

The data for 2010 are taken from a new source to that used previously and hence are not fully consistent with published data for 2009 or earlier years. However the differences are small—in June 2009 the total prison population was 63 higher in the old source out of a total prison population of just over 85,000.

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Prisoners: Speech and Language Disorders

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what steps are taken to identify language and communication difficulties in respect of offenders before their arrival in prison. [29072]

Mr Blunt: Escort staff bringing prisoners to prisons carry a Person Escort Record form, which includes a reference to any communication difficulties the prisoner may have. All prisoners are interviewed on first arrival in prison to assess whether they have any language or other communication difficulties. Any problems identified must be recorded and the information forwarded to other relevant departments within the prison.

Prisons: Alcohol

Nick Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what consideration he gave to the merits of including in his Department's Business Plan provision for action to address offenders with alcohol problems. [29147]

Mr Blunt: The MoJ has set out proposals for consultation in its Green Paper aimed to improve access to treatment for drug or mental health problems, which should also help those that have linked alcohol related problems. In addition, the Government will look to explore how payment by results might be extended to cover specialist alcohol treatment for offenders.

Prisons: Private Sector

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many former *(a)* Prison Service employees, *(b)* Prison Service employees at governor grades, *(c)* officials in his Department and *(d)* National Offender Management Service officials each private sector prison operator employs; and if he will make a statement. [29172]

Mr Blunt: The National Offender Management Service does not hold centrally information on the numbers of former Prison Service employees (including governor grades), Ministry of Justice employees or National Offender Management Service employees who are employed by private sector prison companies. Staff have the opportunity to complete an exit questionnaire on leaving the National Offender Management Service but this does not record whether or not staff have secured a post with private sector contractors.

Information obtained from contractors indicates that at least 90 former Prison Service, National Offender Management Service or Ministry of Justice staff currently work in private sector prisons. This figure includes 15 former Prison Service governor grades. However, these figures are the best available and may not be complete.

Remand in Custody: Young People

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what percentage of children who were remanded in custody were subsequently *(a)* acquitted or *(b)* given a community sentence in each of the last five years. [28946]

Mr Blunt: The estimated number and proportion of juveniles remanded in custody at magistrates courts and the Crown court in England and Wales 2005 to 2009 (latest currently available), who were *(a)* subsequently acquitted or *(b)* given a community sentence is shown in the following table.

Estimated number and percentage of juveniles[1] remanded in custody, who were subsequently acquitted or received a non-custodial sentence[2] at magistrates courts and the Crown court, England and Wales 2005-09

	2005	2006	2007	2008[4]	2009
Number					
Magistrates courts[3]					
Acquitted	949	847	794	660	339
Immediate custody	907	914	811	931	888

Estimated number and percentage of juveniles[1] remanded in custody[2] who were subsequently acquitted or received a non-custodial sentence[3] at magistrates courts and the Crown court, England and Wales 2005-09

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*[4]	*2009*
Non-custodial	1,480	1,459	1,664	1,511	977
Of which:					
Community sentence	1,145	1,113	1,244	1,073	694
Crown court					
Acquitted	182	149	162	167	237
Immediate custody	815	814	783	1,052	918
Non-custodial	271	216	211	264	239
Of which:					
Community sentence	205	180	170	212	192
Percentage					
Magistrates courts[5]					
Acquitted	28	26	24	21	15
Immediate custody	27	28	25	30	40
Non-custodial	44	45	51	49	44
Of which:					
Community sentence	34	35	38	35	31
Crown court					
Acquitted	14	13	14	11	17
Immediate custody	64	69	68	71	66
Non-custodial	21	18	18	18	17
Of which:					
Community sentence	16	15	15	14	14

[1] Defined as being aged 10 to 17 at the date of appearance in court.

[2] Includes those remanded in custody at any stage of proceedings at magistrates and the Crown court who may also have been given bail at some stage of those proceedings.

[3] Magistrates courts figures exclude those committed for trial or sentence at the Crown court and those who failed to appear. Non-custodial sentences include discharges, fines, community sentences, and a number of other sentences that do not involve incarceration. Acquitted includes proceedings discontinued, discharged, withdrawn and dismissed.

[4] Excludes data for Cardiff magistrates court for April, July and August 2008.

[5] Percentages here represent the proportions of all juveniles who were remanded in custody, excluding those who failed to appear and where the magistrates court committed the defendant for trial or sentence to the Crown court.

Notes:

1. Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

2. It is known that in some police force areas, information on remand decisions is not always readily available to those coding court proceedings returns. In certain cases, the return may be mistakenly coded as if no remand had taken place. For magistrates court proceedings, the number of remands and more importantly, the number which are in custody, are believed to be under-recorded in total. As the breakdown of remands into bail and custody cases for a number of forces is not accurate for a number of forces, estimates have to be made to provide national figures.

3. Some percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Young Offenders: Basic Skills

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many and what proportion of young offenders completed *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy courses in each of the last five years. [29111]

Mr Blunt: The data provided in the following table displays the number of young people who have achieved a qualification in Prison Service Young Offender Institutions.

Comparable data are not available for the academic year 2005-06, or for courses completed in Secure Children's Homes, Secure Training Centres, or privately run prisons.

Academic year (1 August to 31 July)	*Literacy*	*Numeracy*
2006-07	2,014	2,680
2007-08	1,826	2,260
2008-09	1,350	2,429
2009-10	1,350	1,813

Data are not available on the proportion of young offenders who have completed these qualifications because data are collected on the number of episodes started in public YOIs, and not the number of young people. An episode refers to a period a young person has spent in custody and it is possible that one young person can start or finish more than one custodial episode at different points of each year for different offences.

The number of episodes started in the academic year 2006-07 was 9,118 and in 2007-08 was 9308. Data has not yet been published for academic years 2008-09 or 2009-10.

It should be noted that a large number of these episodes are young people who have been remanded to custody, often for very short periods of time. The number of young people remanded in custody in the financial year 2007-08 was 5663 and 2006-07 was 6360.

There has been a significant reduction of the number of young people in custody since 2008.

Young Offenders: North West

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what specialist accommodation is available for under-18s on bail or remand in the North West. [28936]

Mr Blunt: Young people who are subject to bail or non-secure remand and who are in need of accommodation can be housed in a variety of lodgings. These can be provided by either the local authority or private providers including: foster homes; children's homes; hostels; bed and breakfast accommodation; or accommodation provided by voluntary organisations. Such placements are arranged by a youth offending team worker and social worker, and put before a placement panel. While there is no specific definition of "specialist" accommodation, the underlying principle will be to identify suitable accommodation that would most appropriately meet the needs of the young person, taking into account the nature of the offence and protection of the public.

Young males aged 15 to 17 who are remanded to custody in the North West would normally be placed at HMPYOI Hindley. In a small number of cases where there are specific concerns about an individual's ability to manage in mainstream YOI accommodation, they may be remanded to HMPYOI Wetherby in West Yorkshire, which has additional dedicated accommodation for 15 to 17-year-old males. Females aged 17 who are remanded to custody would be placed at the Rivendell Unit which is a dedicated young women's unit at HMPYOI New Hall in Wakefield.

All young people aged 12 to 14 and females aged 15 and 16 who are remanded, are subject to a court ordered secure remand. Where a court decides to remand them to secure accommodation they would be placed in either a secure training centre (the nearest to the North West region being Hassockfield in County Durham) or a secure children's home (the two in the North West being Barton Moss in Manchester and Red Bank in Merseyside). Additionally, males aged 15 to 16 who are deemed by a court to meet certain vulnerability criteria may also be given a court ordered secure remand and may be placed at a secure training centre or secure children's home. Males aged 15 to 17 who are not deemed to be vulnerable, would be remanded to a young offender institution. Children aged between 10 and 12 can be remanded to the local authority and if they meet certain criteria may be placed by the local authority into a secure children's home.

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of inmates at each young offender institution in the North West was able to exercise outside on a daily basis in the latest period for which figures are available. [29073]

Mr Blunt: At HMYOI Lancaster Farms, the only dedicated Young Offender Institution in the North West, all young offenders routinely have the opportunity to exercise in the open air on a daily basis.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Overseas Territories

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what official visits Ministers in his Department have made to UK overseas territories since 1997. [28822]

Mr Duncan: The information requested is as follows:

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State George Foulkes visited Montserrat from 12-13 January 1999.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Gareth Thomas visited Montserrat from 21-22 June 2004.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Michael Foster visited the Turks and Caicos islands from 24-28 May 2009, to attend the annual meeting of the Caribbean Development Bank.

Details of all travel costing in excess of £500 by all Cabinet Ministers since 1997, and by all Ministers since 2007, up until May 2010, are available on the Cabinet Office website at:

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Details of travel undertaken by Department for International Development (DFID) Ministers since May 2010 are available on DFID's website at:

www.dfid.gov.uk

Departmental Manpower

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many of his Department's staff at each civil service grade have experience in working on matters of agricultural policy; and how many of them are currently working in each division of his Department. [28795]

Mr O'Brien: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 36W, to the hon. Member for Lewisham East (Heidi Alexander).

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28844]

Mr Duncan: Grey fleet travel refers to mileage in employee-owned vehicles. The Department for International Development (DFID) reimburses employees for private mileage undertaken in the direct implementation of their role at either the standard mileage rate, or the cost of public transport if public transport is less. In order to claim reimbursement at either rate, the employee must have a full comprehensive insurance policy permitting the use of their motor vehicle in connection with DFID business.

DFID is unable to provide the information requested without incurring disproportionate cost. Due to updates in our central accounting system across the Department, DFID will be able to report spend on such reimbursements from 2010-11 onwards.

Developing Countries: Health Services

Mr Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if his Department will provide *(a)* technical assistance and *(b)* advice to developing countries to support the elimination of user fees for healthcare for poor people. [29082]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) is currently reviewing all its aid programmes, including our support to the health sector, to assess the impact of these programmes, and to ensure UK aid is effective, accelerates progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and represents value for money.

DFID has agreed to provide technical assistance to developing countries wishing to implement pro-poor health financing reforms. This will initially be done through support to the World Health Organisation (WHO) to implement the recommendations of the World Health Report and will be in the form of a senior health economist being seconded to WHO by DFID for two years.

We are also evaluating proposals to provide additional financial resources. These resources will be used to provide direct assistance to developing countries wishing to implement pro-poor health financing reforms. WHO is anticipating a large increase in demand for this type of assistance following the recent publication of the World Health Report, and has approached DFID for this support due to our well-proven and valued track record of providing assistance in this area.

Overseas Aid: Cost-effectiveness

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development on what date a comprehensive value for money assessment was last made in respect of each multilateral agency in receipt of funding from his Department. [28819]

Mr Duncan: On 9 June 2010, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development launched the multilateral aid review to ensure maximum value for money from the Department for International Development's (DFID's) contributions to multilateral organisations. The review will look at all organisations to which DFID provides core funding, and will assess the relevance of each organisation to the UK's development objectives, their organisational effectiveness and their ability to deliver results on the ground. This is the first time such a comprehensive value for money assessment, looking across all agencies, has been undertaken by the UK Government. The findings of the review are due to be published in February 2011.

Overseas Aid: Expenditure

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has provided to each multilateral agency since 1997. [28821]

Mr Duncan: Details of the Department for International Development's (DFID's) aid expenditure are published in "Statistics on International Development", which is available in the Library of the House and on DFID's website.

Turks and Caicos Islands

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has allocated to the Turks and Caicos Islands in each of the last 10 years. [28810]

Mr Duncan: Details of the Department for International Development's (DFID's) aid expenditure, including in the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI), are published in 'Statistics on International Development', which is available in the Library of the House and on DFID's website. Bilateral programme expenditure and imputed expenditure through multilateral organisations in TCI from 2000-01 to 2009-10

are shown in the following table. Figures for 2010-11 will be published in the next addition of 'Statistics on International Development'.

£000

Financial year	*Total DFID bilateral*	*DFID imputed multilateral shares*
2009-10	4,690	n-a
2008-09	1,000	0
2007-08	178	358
2006-07	149	886
2005-06	357	0
2004-05	1,187	0
2003-04	741	2
2002-03	1,532	0
2001-02	2,719	256
2000-01	2,845	0

n-a = not available

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support his Department is providing to the interim administration in the Turks and Caicos Islands. [28811]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) has provided a short-term loan, currently totalling £19.7 million, to help the interim Administration meet unavoidable commitments, including payment of public sector salaries.

DFID is also providing technical assistance, including through funding a chief financial officer who has assumed direct control for all financial decisions.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many officials from his Department are stationed in the Turks and Caicos Islands. [28812]

Mr Duncan: There are no Department for International Development (DFID) staff members permanently stationed in the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI). UK-based staff make occasional visits to TCI to provide advice and assistance when necessary.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Aviation: Security

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what dates she has discussed air security issues with the Secretary of State for Transport since 11 May 2010. [22748]

Mrs May *[holding answer 8 November 2010]*: I chair a weekly security meeting bringing together a wide range of Government Departments and agencies which contribute to our counter-terrorism and security work. The Department for Transport is represented at that meeting. Since the attempted terrorist attacks on cargo aircraft on 29 October I have had a number of discussions with the Secretary of State for Transport. We met in COBR on 1 November and 4 November to lead the Government's response to the attempted attacks and continue to meet regularly. Our Departments are working together closely on the review of air freight security which I announced in my statement to the House on 1 November, *Official Report*, columns 632-634. Our officials meet regularly both bilaterally and with industry to discuss improvements to aviation security.

Containment

Dr Huppert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she plans to review her Department's policy on the use of containment in respect of *(a)* children and *(b)* adults; and if she will make a statement. [27682]

James Brokenshire: The use of police tactics, such as containment, is an operational matter for police forces. The courts have ruled that containment is a lawful tactic when used proportionately.

Criminal Records

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what period a conviction remains on a criminal record. [28467]

Lynne Featherstone: A conviction held on the police national computer will normally be retained for 100 years from the date of the subject's birth.

Demonstrations: Parliament Square

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Bosworth of 24 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 257, on what dates she discussed the matter of protesters in Parliament Square with the Mayor of London; what the venue was of each such meeting where this issue was discussed; what the outcome was of each such discussion; and if she will make a statement. [28072]

James Brokenshire *[holding answer 2 December 2010]*: My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister has regular meetings with ministerial colleagues, officials and others.

The Government have introduced measures in the Police Reform Social and Responsibility Bill to support rights to peaceful protest around Parliament while also tackling encampments and other disruptive activity on Parliament Square.

Detention Centres: Children

Lindsay Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions she has had with officials at the UK Border Agency on her Department's policy on the detention of children. [29323]

Damian Green *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The Government are committed to ending the detention of children for immigration purposes. A review is under way to consider how this can be done in a way which protects the welfare of children and ensures that families with no right to be in the UK leave. During the course of that review the Home Secretary and I have had frequent discussions with officials.

Freedom Bill

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress she has made on the timetable for the introduction of the Freedom Bill; and if she will make a statement. [29436]

James Brokenshire: As set out in the Home Office Business Plan (published on 8 November) we will introduce a Freedom Bill by February 2011.

Human Trafficking

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what non-governmental organisations she *(a)* has consulted and *(b)* plans to consult in formulating her Department's new priorities for reducing the incidence of human trafficking. [28175]

Damian Green *[holding answer 2010]*: As part of the new strategy to combat human trafficking, which I announced on 14 October, my officials will be consulting relevant voluntary organisations in due course to ensure that their views are heard. The Home Office will shortly be contacting relevant groups regarding consultation.

Identity and Passport Service: Newport (Gwent)

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions she has had with the First Minister of Wales on the consultation on the proposed closure of Newport Passport Office. [29162]

Damian Green *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The Identity and Passport Service is currently engaged on a formal consultation with the trade unions on the proposed closure of the passport application processing centre at Newport. The First Minister has written a number of letters on the subject.

Identity Cards: Information and Communications Technology

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of IT equipment purchased by or on behalf of the Government in respect of the identity cards scheme; what was done with that equipment when she decided to end that scheme; and how much such equipment will be deployed for other purposes in government. [28769]

Damian Green: The cost of IT equipment purchased was £6.5 million in respect of the Critical Workers Identity Card and Early Interest Scheme. All IT equipment has been withdrawn from operation as part of the ID card decommissioning activities and securely stored. Assets and IT equipment relating to the National Identity Register require disposal/destruction and IPS will ensure that this happens in line with agreed guidelines.

The secure disposal or re-use of new or nearly-new IT equipment is dependant upon the level of protectively marked material or personal data stored on the system. As our IT equipment is generally managed under contract by our IT service providers, they will manage the re-use or disposal according to central Government security policies. The Home Office has a general policy of sharing, re-use and commonality of IT capabilities, in order to increase efficiency, reduce costs and improve environmental sustainability.

Illegal Immigrants

Mr Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal immigrants were removed from the UK in *(a)* July, *(b)* August and *(c)* September 2010. [27793]

Damian Green: The following table shows the number of removals and voluntary departures for July to September 2010.

Removals and voluntary departures[1] [2], from the United Kingdom, by type, July to September 2010

Number of departures

	Enforced removals and voluntary departures					
	Enforced removals and notified voluntary departures[4]	*Assisted voluntary returns[5]*	*Other voluntary departures[6]*	*Total*	*Non-asylum cases refused entry at port and subsequently removed[7]*	*Grand total*
July	1,700	430	1,245	3,380	1,555	4,935
August	1,690	430	1,250	3,370	1,600	4,975
September	1,730	390	1,145	3,265	1,520	4,785
July-September	5,125	1,250	3,640	10,015	4,675	14,690

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest five and may not sum to the totals shown because of independent rounding.
[2] Provisional figures. Figures will under record due to data cleansing and data matching exercises that take place after the extracts are taken.
[3] Removals and voluntary departures recorded on the system as at the dates on which the data extracts were taken.
[4] Includes persons leaving under Facilitated Return Schemes.
[5] Persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organization for Migration. May include some on-entry cases and some cases where enforcement action has been initiated.
[6] Persons who it has been established left the UK without informing the immigration authorities.
[7] Includes removals performed by immigration officers at ports using enforcement powers and cases dealt with at juxtaposed controls.

The Home Office publishes statistics on the number of persons removed or departed voluntarily from the UK on a quarterly and annual basis, which are available from the Home Office's Research, Development and Statistics website at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration-asylum-stats.html

A copy of the Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary United Kingdom July-September 2010 will be placed in the House Library.

Lindsay Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate she has made of the number of people living illegally in the UK. [29325]

Damian Green *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* The UK Border Agency does not capture data relating to the number of people living illegally in the UK, because it is not possible to quantify this number accurately.

Members: Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister of State for Borders and Immigration plans to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 20 October 2010 in regard to Mr Muhammad Moazzam Nadeem. [29294]

Damian Green *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* I wrote to the right hon. Member on 2 November 2010.

Offences against Children

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training *(a)* senior investigating officers and *(b)* other police officers receive on (i) the operation of extraterritorial legislation and (ii) investigation of allegations of child sexual abuse committed overseas. [29219]

James Brokenshire *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre has developed a unique programme of professional development courses. These courses are designed to support professionals working to protect children from sexual abuse and law enforcement officers who work to hold offenders to account.

These include a course on 'Understanding Child Sex Offenders: A Foundation Course in Behavioural Analysis'; a course on the Sexual Offences Act and a piloted course on Travelling Sex Offenders.

CEOP, through its Overseas Tracker Team, also gives tactical and strategic advice to police forces and senior investigating officers in relation to the application of extraterritorial legislation and investigations into child sexual abuse committed overseas.

Passports: Biometrics

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether biometric data must be resubmitted each time a person applies for a visa. [28962]

Damian Green: All visa applicants who are required to submit their biometric data must do so each time they apply for a visa.

Police: Demonstrations

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions she has had with the Metropolitan police on the estimate made of the number of children aged *(a)* 16 and under and *(b)* 17 to 18 years who were present at the demonstration in Westminster on Wednesday 24 November 2010 prior to the decision to contain protesters being taken; and if she will make a statement. [28689]

James Brokenshire: The use of police tactics is an operational matter for local police forces. The Home Office has not held discussions with the Metropolitan police on the numbers of children present at the demonstration in Westminster on 24 November prior to the decision to contain protestors.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what discussions she has had with the Metropolitan police on the decision *(a)* to use horses to disperse the crowd and *(b)* to contain protesters during the demonstration in Westminster on Wednesday 24 November 2010; and if she will make a statement; [28690]

(2) whether she has assessed any video recordings of the use of horses at the demonstration in Westminster on Wednesday 24 November 2010; and if she will make a statement; [28691]

(3) what information she has requested from the Metropolitan police on *(a)* the impact on protesters and *(b)* the outcome for police operations of the decision to (i) contain protesters and (ii) use horses to disperse the crowds at the demonstration in Westminster on Wednesday 24 November 2010; and if she will make a statement; [28692]

(4) what discussions she has had with the Metropolitan police on the proportionality of decisions *(a)* to use horses to disperse the crowd and *(b)* to contain protesters at the demonstration in Westminster on Wednesday 24 November 2010. [28757]

James Brokenshire: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary routinely discusses a range of policing matters with the commissioner of the Metropolitan police. However, police tactics, including the use of horses and containment, are operational matters for the police. The Home Secretary has not made an assessment of video recordings of police tactics used on 24 November. The Home Secretary has not requested specific information related to the use of containment or police horses but has been provided with an overview of the police operation. The police have to maintain a difficult balance between supporting rights to peaceful protest and ensuring local communities are properly protected, and the Home Secretary has written to the commissioner conveying her support for the police operation on 24 November.

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers the police have to control and manage street demonstrations; and if she will make a statement. [28787]

James Brokenshire: The legal framework for policing demonstrations is set out in the Public Order Act 1986 which gives the police powers to place conditions on demonstrations to prevent serious public disorder, serious disruption to the life of the community and serious damage to property. The legal framework for policing static demonstrations in a designated area around Parliament is set out in sections 132-138 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 which gives police separate powers to place conditions on static demonstrations.

The police have a range of other powers to deal with any criminal offences which take place at demonstrations.

Public Order Offences

John Glen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were *(a)* arrested, *(b)* proceeded against and *(c)* found guilty of offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 in each year from 2000 to 2009. [27867]

James Brokenshire: The information requested on arrests is not collected centrally.

The arrests collection held by the Home Office covers arrests for recorded crime (notifiable offences) only, broken down at a main offence group level, covering categories such as violence against the person and robbery. From these centrally reported categories it is not possible to separately identify offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986.

The Ministry of Justice have provided data relating to the number of persons proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences under section five of the Public Order Act 1986, England and Wales, from 2000 to 2009. This can be viewed in the following table.

Number of persons proceeded against at the magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences under the Public Order Act 1986, section 5, England and Wales 2000 to 2009

Offence description	*Statute*	*Year*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, section 5	2000	24,336	16,603
		2001	23,203	15,479
		2002	23,500	15,951
		2003	25,225	17,410
		2004	25,006	18,164
		2005	24,684	18,092
		2006	26,406	19,536
		2007	27,683	21,525
		2008[4]	24,869	19,986
		2009	22,767	18,249
Racially aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986 section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 31(1)(c) and (5)	2000	772	461
		2001	1,181	734
		2002	1,165	710
		2003	1,376	913
		2004	1,646	1,079
		2005	1,903	1,338
		2006	2,409	1,737
		2007	2,811	2,100
		2008[4]	2,827	2,251
		2009	3,152	2,518
Religiously aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986 section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 31(1)(c) and (5)	2000		
		2001		
		2002	3	3
		2003	12	6
		2004	16	13
		2005	20	17
		2006	36	30
		2007	38	32
		2008[4]	44	30
		2009	50	30

Number of persons proceeded against at the magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences under the Public Order Act 1986, section 5, England and Wales 2000 to 2009[1, 2]

Offence description	*Statute*	*Year*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Racially or religiously aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 31(1)(c) and (5)	2000[3]		
		2001		
		2002	7	7
		2003	85	71
		2004	155	100
		2005	228	161
		2006	360	271
		2007	400	314
		2008[4]	437	351
		2009	511	411

[1] The figures given in the table on court proceedings relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[2] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

[3] Staffordshire police force were only able to submit sample data for persons proceeded against and convicted in the magistrates courts for the year 2000. Although sufficient to estimate higher orders of data, these data are not robust enough at a detailed level and have been excluded from the table.

[4] Excludes data for Cardiff magistrates court for April, July and August 2008.

Source:

Justice Statistics Analytical Services—Ministry of Justice

UK Border Agency: Liverpool

Mrs Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the likely effects of the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review on the number of staff employed by the UK Border Agency in Liverpool; and if she will make a statement. [28244]

Damian Green *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* The spending review settlement for the UK Border Agency will mean that it needs to reduce staff numbers by about 5,200 by the end of the spending review period. This will reduce the work force to around 18,000 by 2015. It is not possible to say what the likely effects of the reductions in staff number in Liverpool are at this stage. The UK Border Agency is still working through detailed planning but will let staff and the public know as soon as the plans are clear. However, the UK Border Agency is committed to discussing work force planning in detail with the unions and our staff before confirming any changes.

On 4 November, the Home Office implemented a new restructuring, redeployment and redundancy policy, based on ACAS best practise, which provides a framework within which to manage down headcount. Compulsory redundancy continues to be a last resort and the UK Border Agency have committed to using a range of redundancy avoidance measures including voluntary early release, a recruitment freeze on external appointments and redeployment to ensure that this is the case.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Departmental Catering

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much has been spent by his Department on outside catering in each of the last five years. [28576]

Alistair Burt: We cannot separate out catering costs from wider official hospitality expenses without incurring disproportionate cost.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28380]

Alistair Burt: This information is not held in the form requested and is available only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Redundancy

Mr Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff of his Department have *(a)* been made redundant and *(b)* accepted redundancy terms since May 2010; and what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of those redundancies. [27726]

Alistair Burt: Since May 2010 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not made any permanent member of staff redundant. We have made payments equivalent to statutory redundancy to two non-permanent members of staff who were appointed on fixed term contracts and were entitled to a redundancy payment following expiry of their fixed terms. The cost to the public purse of these payments was £2,850.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28851]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) spent the following on grey fleet (re-imbursing mileage expenses) in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10:

(a) £146,557.31. This is made up of £50,949.98 by FCO UK, and £95,607.33 by FCO Services.

(b) £175,999.24. This is made up of £53,925.01 by FCO UK, and £122,074.23 by FCO Services.

Human Rights

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in respect of which states his Department has received allegations of human rights abuses in the last 12 months. [29157]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's overseas missions receive information on human rights, including allegations of abuse, from a wide variety of sources. These include local non-governmental organisations, human rights defenders and local media. Our missions use this information in their assessment of the local human rights situation, and raise allegations of human rights abuses with host Governments on a case-by-case basis. We do not centrally hold information on reports of individual cases of human rights abuses, so to answer your question, an FCO-wide search would be required which would incur a disproportionate cost.

Human rights reporting is key to our work to promote and protect human rights around the world. The FCO will publish a command paper in spring 2011 which will detail our human rights work around the world and our assessment of the human rights situation in a number of countries.

Iran: Human Rights

Mr Frank Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his foreign policy objectives are in respect of Iran; and what assessment he has made of the implications for those objectives of the recent UN statement on human rights violations in that country. [29195]

Alistair Burt: The central objective of our policy is to stop Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon. To this end, my Department is playing a leading diplomatic role in an internationally-agreed strategy of pressure in the form of sanctions, and engagement, to persuade Iran to resolve the concerns over its nuclear programme.

We would also like to see a significant improvement in the human rights situation in Iran. The UK strongly supported the recent UN General Assembly resolution on human rights in Iran and my ministerial colleagues and I take every opportunity to highlight cases of concern.

Japan: Whales

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Japanese government on its whaling activities in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary; and if he will make a statement. [29434]

Mr Jeremy Browne: We regularly raise the issue of whaling at ministerial and official level with our Japanese counterparts. Most recently, I raised my Government's concerns about Japanese whaling with the then Deputy Foreign Minister, Takemasa, during my visit to Japan from 9-10 September. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary also raised the issue during his 15-16 July visit to Japan. The Japanese Government are in no doubt as to the strength of feeling in this country about all of Japan's whaling activity. We consider Japan's lethal whaling for 'scientific research' purposes wholly unnecessary.

We remain opposed to all cetacean hunts, and will continue to work to challenge Japan's position and seek a change in their policy.

Kashmir

Mr Frank Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions his Department has had with the government of Pakistan on the Kashmir territorial dispute. [29255]

Alistair Burt: I refer the hon. Member to my response to the hon. Member for Gedling (Vernon Coaker) on 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 42W.

Western Sahara: Human Rights

Mr Mike Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 559W, on Western Sahara: violence, what the restrictions on access for international observers are; and by whom these restrictions are imposed. [29285]

Alistair Burt: Our understanding is that there are currently no restrictions on access to Western Sahara and that members of civil society and embassies in Rabat are able to visit.

Mr Mike Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 559W, on Western Sahara: violence, if he will instruct HM Ambassador in Rabat to send observers to Western Sahara. [29286]

Alistair Burt: Officials from our embassy in Rabat regularly visit Western Sahara and will continue to do so. I raised the point about Independent monitoring during my recent visit to the region.

Mr Mike Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 558W, on Western Sahara: human rights, if the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State will raise with the government of Morocco its duty to protect the citizens of Western Sahara and allow human rights monitoring as a signatory to the Fourth Geneva Convention when he visits Morocco. [29287]

Alistair Burt: I have recently returned from Morocco where I discussed the issue of Western Sahara with my Moroccan interlocutors. During my visit I repeated our wish to see the establishment of an independent monitoring mechanism in Western Sahara.

TREASURY

Banks: Loans

Ms Bagshawe: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether he plans to bring forward proposals to discourage banks from changing the terms of finance for small and medium-sized enterprises at short notice; [28120]

(2) if he will bring forward proposals to discourage banks from changing at short notice their terms relating to *(a)* finance, *(b)* credit and *(c)* overdrafts in respect of small and medium-sized enterprises. [28923]

Mr Hoban: The Government believe that it is in the interest of banks to serve the needs of businesses, to treat customers fairly and support access to finance. Decisions about the terms and conditions of individual loans are a matter for banks to make on a commercial basis and it would be inappropriate for Government to intervene in these decisions.

Earlier this year, the six major UK banks and the British Bankers Association (BBA) established a BBA Taskforce, in response to the Government's Green Paper on business finance. The BBA Taskforce committed to improving customer relationships through a new Lending Code, ensuring better access to finance and promoting better understanding amongst their customers. In order to ensure better access to finance, the BBA Taskforce also committed to establish and invest in a new £1.5 billion Business Growth Fund, which will provide capital to growing businesses.

Further information about the BBA Taskforce is available at:

http://www.bba.org.uk/media/article/business-finance-taskforce

Departmental Reviews

Mr Watson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what departmental policy reviews his Department has undertaken since 6 May 2010; on what date each such review *(a)* was announced and *(b)* is expected to publish its findings; what estimate he has made of the cost of each such review; who has been appointed to lead each such review; to what remuneration each review leader is entitled; how many (i) full-time equivalent civil servants and (ii) seconded staff are working on each such review; from which organisations such staff have been seconded; and how much on average such seconded staff will be paid for their work on the review. [21884]

Justine Greening: The Treasury only commissions reviews where the external expertise on offer is in the public interest. Any costs of external reviews falls within the Treasury's departmental expenditure limit which is due to decrease by 33% across the spending review period.

Details of policy reviews undertaken since 6 May 2010 are as follows:

A review of public sector pensions was announced on 20 June 2010 and is expected to be completed by Budget 2011. The review is being led by John Hutton who is being paid £4,000 per month plus reasonable expenses in line with Treasury expenses policy. The Independent Pension Commission is supported by 11 full-time equivalent staff who have been drawn from HM Treasury, Department for Work and Pensions, Ministry of Defence, Treasury Solicitors, PwC and KPMG. The pay costs of seconded staff are, in the main, met by their parent organisation. The cost of the review is being met by reprioritising existing budgets with no consequent increase in public spending.

A review of fair pay in the public sector was announced on 19 July 2010 and is expected to be completed by March 2011. The review will be led by Will Hutton who will be able to claim reasonable expenses in line with Treasury rules but will receive no other remuneration. The review is estimated to cost £125,000 which is predominantly the salary costs of one part-time and three full-time civil servants. The cost will be met from within existing provision and will not therefore increase public spending.

The Independent Commission on Banking, chaired by Sir John Vickers, was announced on 16 June 2010 to recommend structural and non-structural measures to reform the banking system. The Commission has been asked to produce a final report by September 2011.

Sir John Vickers will be paid £60,000 per annum and work an average of two days per week. Other Commission members will not be paid and work an average of one day a week on Commission business. All Commissioners will be reimbursed for such travel and subsistence expenses as they incur in pursuit of Commission business, in accordance with HM Treasury's expenses policy. The Commissioner's letters of appointment detail this information, and are available on the Commission's website.

The Commission is supported by a full-time secretariat of 14 officials drawn from HM Treasury, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Financial Services Authority, the Bank of England and the Office of Fair Trading. The pay costs of staff seconded to the secretariat are being met by their parent organisations and are not available centrally.

The Commission will be provided with such other resources as are necessary to perform its task. All Commission costs are being met by reprioritisation from within existing budgets and there will be no consequent increase public spending.

As announced at the launch of the Office of Tax Simplification on 20 July 2010, the office will carry out two initial reviews on tax reliefs (final report by Budget 2011) and small business taxation (interim report by Budget 2011). The office will be led by right hon. Michael Jack as chairman and John Whiting as tax director and neither will receive any remuneration but will be eligible for reasonable expenses in line with Treasury expenses policy. The cost of the individual reviews has not been estimated but the running costs of the office as a whole are estimated to be in the region of £500,000 per annum. The office is staffed by three full time civil servants with backgrounds in HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs. There are four staff seconded at no cost to the office from PwC, BDO, Deloittes and private business, see:

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/ots_who_we_are.htm

Further details on these reviews can be found on the Treasury website:

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

Departmental Travel

Ian Austin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how much expenditure his Department incurred in respect of travel undertaken by each Minister in his Department in *(a)* May and *(b)* June 2010; [8181]

(2) what estimate his Department has made of its expenditure on travel undertaken by *(a)* him and *(b)* each other Minister in his Department in (i) September and (ii) October 2010. [21859]

Justine Greening: As set out in the Ministerial Code Departments will publish, at least quarterly, details of all travel overseas by Ministers. The expenses for the period 13 May to 31 July 2010 were published on the Treasury website on 28 October 2010. I have placed a copy in the Library of the House.

All travel is undertaken in accordance with the Ministerial Code.

EU Grants and Loans: Republic of Ireland

Naomi Long: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the Republic of Ireland on the effects of the financial assistance package for Ireland on *(a)* the Northern Ireland economy and *(b)* financial institutions operating in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. [28629]

Mr Hoban: Treasury Ministers and officials have discussions with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery.

Health Centres: Christchurch

Mr Chope: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 679W, on health centres: Christchurch, what assessment he has made of the taxpayer interest protected by the outcome of his Department's review of the proposed disposal of the former Saxon Square Health Centre on terms acceptable to the district valuer and the Department for Health. [29437]

Danny Alexander: The Treasury aims to protect the taxpayer interest by ensuring public expenditure is good value for money.

Public Expenditure

Simon Kirby: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of GDP was allocated to expenditure by central and local government and their agencies in each year since 1997; and what estimate he has made of the proportion of GDP so allocated in each of the next four years. [28793]

Danny Alexander: Details of local government and central Government expenditure as a percentage of GDP are shown in the following table. These figures are calculated from forecasts contained in the Office for Budget Responsibility's November 2010 Economic and Fiscal Outlook and historical data published by the Office for National Statistics.

Table 1: Details of CG and LG expenditure as a percentage of GDP

	Central Government and local government expenditure	*Nominal GDP*	*Local and CG expenditure as a percentage of GDP*
1997-98	320.6	843	38
1998-99	328.7	890	37
1999-2000	342.1	945	36
2000-01	362.4	990	37
2001-02	386.7	1,032	37
2002-03	418.3	1,092	38
2003-04	453.4	1,157	39
2004-05	488.2	1,215	40
2005-06	515.9	1,274	41
2006-07	545.5	1,348	40
2007-08	578.1	1,424	41
2008-09	621.7	1,434	43
2009-10	664.9	1,403	47
2010-11	689.0	1,483	46
2011-12	694.8	1,550	45
2012-13	702.6	1,628	43
2013-14	710.5	1,721	41
2014-15	723.7	1,817	40
2015-16	744.0	1,916	39

Sources:

1. Expenditure is defined as the central and local government contribution to total managed expenditure, which is current expenditure plus capital gross expenditure (before deducting depreciation). Historical data are from the following ONS series:

Central Government calculated as ANLP − ANNS + NSRN

Local government calculated as ANLQ − ANNT + NSRO

2. Future years are from corresponding lines of table 1.12 in fiscal supplementary tables to the Economic and Fiscal Outlook November 2010 published by the OBR.

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Glasgow North of 11 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 474W, on public expenditure, what discussions he has had with *(a)* ministerial colleagues and *(b)* the devolved Administrations on calculating the Statement of Funding Policy for the purposes of the Barnett Formula according to the level of individual programmes rather than at departmental level; and whether he has made an estimate of the effects of calculations made according to the level of individual programme rather than at the departmental level on the level of payments made. [29156]

Danny Alexander *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The 2010 edition of the Statement of Funding Policy was agreed with the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland following consultation with the devolved Administrations.

Spending review settlements are agreed at departmental level and not individual programme level and the Barnett Formula is applied to total budgets. No Barnett consequentials have been calculated for individual programmes.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Apprentices

Gordon Birtwistle: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what steps he plans to take to ensure parity of esteem between apprenticeships and university degrees; [29221]

(2) if he will bring forward proposals to establish graduation ceremonies for students who have completed courses in practical skills for the purposes of encouraging parity of esteem between manual and academic achievements. [29222]

Mr Hayes: The Government believe that achievement of high standards in academic study and in practical skills are equally worthy of celebration. Proposals are therefore being developed to secure greater public recognition for those who successfully complete skills training and, in particular, apprenticeships.

For example, we are already working with the National Apprenticeship Service to introduce graduation ceremonies for apprentices, an apprentice Roll of Honour and new alumni networks. We are also considering how apprenticeship training can be recognised as conferring "technician" status in appropriate sectors. And we will further ensure there are clear progression routes into and through apprenticeships into higher level skills training.

Business: Government Assistance

Tom Blenkinsop: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what measures he plans to introduce to meet the Government's commitment to manufacturing and new green businesses. [26694]

Mr Prisk: The growth review announced in November sets in train an intensive programme of work to address the barriers to growth facing business that will form the basis of this Government's agenda for the rest of this Parliament. It is very much a sign of the importance we attach to manufacturing that one of the first sector growth reviews will be advanced manufacturing. The advanced manufacturing growth review will report back with policy proposals by Budget 2011.

In the Local Growth White Paper, we have set out specific national green growth priorities on which we want to engage with local enterprise partnerships. This includes low carbon/green innovation, which will be taken forward nationally through bodies such as the Technology Strategy Board and Carbon Trust.

We have announced £60 million funding to support the development of infrastructure for offshore wind manufacturing.

In spring 2011, we will publish a Green Economy Roadmap to bring together the key elements of the green economy into a single document, providing business and investors with as much certainty as possible about the future.

The UK economy requires significantly higher levels of investment in, particularly green, infrastructure. The Green Investment Bank (GIB) is one of a number of policies which, together, will support UK growth, environmental and climate change targets. The GIB will be funded by £1 billion from departmental budgets and significant additional proceeds from Government sale of assets. The GIB will be operational by September 2012.

Copyright: EU Action

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what discussions the Government has had with the Hungarian government on progress on the draft EU Copyright Term Directive during the Hungarian presidency of the Council of Ministers. [28834]

Mr Davey: My officials have met with their Hungarian counterparts and discussed a range of IP related issues, and noted that term may be an issue during the Hungarian presidency.

Departmental Postal Services

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which services of his Department and its predecessors have been the subject of a contract awarded following a tender process in which Post Office Ltd submitted a bid since 1997-98. [24902]

Mr Davey: Following an *Official Journal of the European Union* (OJEU) competition run by the Department's facilities management team, courier contracts were awarded in April 2004 to:

Royal Mail Group, to provide same day courier services, and

Parcelforce Worldwide, to provide next day/48 hour courier services to the Department.

Departmental Sponsorship

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what expenditure *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [27514]

Mr Davey: The BIS accounting system does not disaggregate expenditure between sponsorship and other form of support given. Therefore, the amount spent on sponsorship could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Information for non-departmental public bodies is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

All expenditure has to be incurred in accordance with the principles of Managing Public Money and the Treasury handbook on Regularity and Propriety.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28845]

Mr Davey: The following amounts were spent on grey fleet by BIS and its predecessor Departments:

	£
2008-09	[1]384,157
2009-10	[1]352,297

[1] These amounts will also include charges for parking and tolls as such costs are included in claims for mileage allowances. These can be excluded only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent estimate he has made of the number of questions to his Department tabled in the *(a)* House of Commons and *(b)* House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available. [28495]

Mr Davey: In the case of questions that are deemed to be "round robin", "The Guide to Parliamentary Work", published by the Leader of the House of Commons

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/government-business/parliamentary-business.aspx

states that Departments should not delay preparing an answer until 'round robin' advice is provided, and should not miss the target deadlines for this reason.

Higher Education: Northern Ireland

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what discussions he has had with the Finance Minister in the Northern Ireland Executive on the likely effect of his proposed changes to higher education funding *(a)* on the Northern Ireland Block Grant via Barnett consequentials and *(b)* on funding available for Northern Ireland universities in the period between the implementation of the proposed arrangements in England and the introduction of any new arrangements for Northern Ireland by the devolved administration. [29246]

Mr Willetts: Adjustments in the block grant totals for the devolved Administrations through the Barnett formula are calculated on the basis of the overall change in departmental expenditure limits rather than any particular programmes within them. We have consistently indicated that each devolved Administration will need to make its own decisions about how to fund higher education and the other services for which it is responsible within the overall total available to it. Although we have discussed our proposals for reform of higher education with the Minister for Employment and Lifelong Learning in Northern Ireland it has not been discussed with the Finance Minister.

Higher Education: Student Numbers

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people resident in Bexleyheath and Crayford constituency attended university in each of the last three years. [28442]

Mr Willetts: The latest available information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is shown in the table. Figures for the 2009/10 academic year will be available in mid January 2011.

The Department has recently received updated postcode information; therefore figures may not match previously published information.

Constituency level information is not available for students who study higher education courses in further education colleges.

Enrolments[1] by Bexleyheath and Crayford constituency[2]

UK Higher Education Institutions—academic years 2006/07 to 2008/09

Academic year	*Enrolments*
2006/07	2,195
2007/08	2,255
2008/09	2,380

[1] Covers enrolments to all levels and modes of study.

[2] Excludes enrolments whose constituency could not be established due to missing or invalid postcode information.

Note:

Figures are based on a HESA standard registration population and have been rounded to the nearest five.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Innovation

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which innovation centres supported by regional development agencies are designated as excellent. [29178]

Mr Willetts: The starting point for the future funding of technology and innovation centres will be the priorities for the Technology Strategy Board's overall programme of work and its objectives for specific technology areas.

Some of the existing RDA funded centres may form the basis for a future technology and innovation centres with further development. However, no decisions have been made and the Technology Strategy Board will work with industry, stakeholders, and wider government to identify the priority areas and governance structure for the elite network of technology and innovation centres by April 2011.

Post Offices: Credit Unions

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what discussions he has had with the Post Office on the integration of credit unions into Post Office branches. [28323]

Mr Davey: The Post Office already works with Credit Unions, and many Credit Union account holders can already access their accounts at post offices through arrangements with the Co-Operative Bank. It is estimated that in the last six months almost 80,000 Credit Union transactions have been carried out in post office branches.

On 9 November the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills published a policy statement on the future of the Post Office: 'Securing the Future of the Post Office in the Digital Age', which firmly supports a stronger link up between the Post Office and Credit Unions. We are actively looking into ways the Post Office and Credit Unions can work more closely together, and I have discussed this issue with senior management at Post Office Ltd.

Radio Frequencies

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what representations he has received from Vodafone on the forthcoming digital dividend spectrum auction in 2010. [29176]

Mr Vaizey: UK mobile network operator, Vodafone has made a number of representations to me, both verbally and through written communication, on the proposed auction of 800 MHz spectrum including the importance they place on being able to participate in that auction.

Retail Distribution Review

Mark Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has made an assessment of the effects of the Retail Distribution Review on *(a)* independent financial advisers and *(b)* other small businesses. [29244]

Mr Hoban *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for West Worcestershire (Harriett Baldwin) on 6 December, *Official Report*, column 95W.

Sixth Form Education: Capital Investment

Damian Hinds: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) how many sixth form colleges and further education colleges have undertaken capital works in excess of *(a)* £100,000 and *(b)* £1,000,000 which have attracted a value added tax rate of zero in the last 10 years; [29179]

(2) what the monetary value was of capital works undertaken by sixth form colleges and further education colleges which have been zero-rated for VAT in 2009-10. [29180]

Mr Hayes: Capital funding for further education colleges is administrated by the Skills Funding Agency and I have asked Geoff Russell, the chief executive of Skills Funding, to write to my hon. Friend with the information requested. A copy of his letter will be placed in the House Libraries.

South West Regional Development Agency

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much he plans to allocate to the South West Regional Development Agency in *(a)* 2011-12 and *(b)* future years to enable it to honour outstanding commitments. [29193]

Mr Prisk: The allocation to the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) for 2011/12 is expected to be confirmed shortly. Subject to parliamentary approval of the Public Bodies Bill, SWRDA is expected to close by 31 March 2012. No allocations to it will be made after closure. It is expected that legal commitments still remaining after closure will transfer to successor bodies and be met from the resources provided by the spending review settlement.

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which organisations his Department has proposed to staff of the South West Development Agency as options for transfers of employment. [29194]

Mr Prisk: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) have confirmed their intention that activity to deliver the Rural Development Programme for England will transfer from South West Development Agency and other regional development agencies (RDA) to core DEFRA in due course. Further announcements on other organisations transferring in functions and RDA staff will be made in the coming months as transition and closure plans are developed.

Spam: E-mail

Simon Hart: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has assessed the merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to reduce or eliminate unsolicited e-mails, in particular those of a pornographic nature; and if he will make a statement. [28734]

Mr Prisk: The Information Commissioner's Office has responsibility for enforcing the regulations to control unsolicited e-mails (spam) and complaints about breaches of enforcement notices. Such a breach is a criminal offence with a maximum fine of up to £5,000.

The Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 require organisations to only send marketing e-mails to individuals who have agreed to receive them, except where there is an existing clearly defined customer relationship.

Spam is a global problem and now accounts for over 85% of all internet traffic[1]. Approximately 96% of spam originates outside the UK and for that reason, the steps we can take in the UK to reduce its incidence and effect are limited.

[1] *Source:*

Symantech—The State of Spam—November 2010

Students: Fees and Charges

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) if he will meet a delegation of students from Northern Ireland to discuss the implications for them of his proposals to increase tuition fees in England and Wales before his proposals are put to the House for agreement; [28664]

(2) what meetings he has had with representatives of students since his announcement of a proposed increase in tuition fees. [28670]

Mr Willetts: The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is responsible for the funding of higher education in England only. It is for the Northern Ireland Executive to decide how it wishes to fund higher education students from Northern Ireland.

My ministerial colleagues and I are in regular contact with Aaron Porter and the National Union of Students (NUS) at a national level and through the National Scholarship Programme, the latest meeting for which was held on 6 December. We also hold discussions with students whenever we visit a higher education institution.

Damian Hinds: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what estimate he has made of the contribution to tuition fees that would be required of a newly-starting *(a)* nurse, *(b)* teacher and *(c)* social worker who had attended a three year course at a university charging (i) £4,000 and (ii) £6,000 per annum in the first year of their employment; [29220]

(2) if he will estimate the average weekly student loan payment for a newly-qualified *(a)* nurse, *(b)* teacher and *(c)* social worker in their first year of employment who had attended a university charging £3,290 per year in tuition fees under the existing student finance system. [29300]

Mr Willetts: Student loans are repaid on an income contingent basis; the amount borrowed by an individual would have no bearing on the amount of contribution repaid in the first year or any year of their employment.

Under the current student finance system, borrowers repay 9% of their income over the income threshold of £15,000. A nurse in the first year of employment earning a salary of £21,000, would pay £10.38 per week; for a teacher earning £24,000, this figure would be £15.58 per week; and for a social worker earning £23,000, the weekly payment would be £13.85.

All borrowers under the proposed future system will repay 9% of their income over an income threshold of £21,000. A nurse in the first year of employment earning £21,000, would pay nothing as their income would not breach the threshold; for a teacher earning £24,000, this figure would be £5.19 per week; and for a social worker earning £23,000, £3.46 per week.

All figures are expressed in 2010 prices.

Vocational Training: Finance

Mr Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent discussions he has had on the establishment of a single funding council for skills training. [29273]

Mr Hayes: The Skills Funding Agency is the single agency responsible for funding skills training for adults, including apprenticeships aged 16 and over. In order to streamline arrangements for FE colleges and other training providers we will transfer responsibility to the Skills Funding Agency for dispensing calculated 16-18 grants to FE colleges and independent training providers on behalf of the Young People's Learning Agency, so that FE colleges and training providers will have a single point of contact with one agency, with a single discussion on performance and audit. This is a significant change sought by the sector for some time. The Young People's Learning Agency will remain responsible for calculating 16-18 grants for named colleges on the basis of lagged pupil numbers and the 16-18 national funding formula.

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Servants

Ian Austin: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what records his Department holds of occasions since May 2010 on which civil servants have expressed concerns about the appropriateness of the *(a)* involvement of, and *(b)* direction of civil servants by, officers of a political party in events organised for the Prime Minister in his official capacity; and on what date each such occurrence was recorded. [28984]

Mr Hurd: It has never been the case that employees of political parties can manage civil servants.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28839]

Mr Maude: The Cabinet Office spent £15,225 in 2008-09 and £12,700 in 2009-10 on grey fleet.

Electronic Government

Simon Kirby: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office when he expects to implement the changes to the DirectGov website recommended in the report to his Department by Martha Lane Fox. [28749]

Mr Hurd: My officials are working on the recommendations from the Martha Lane Fox Strategic Review. They are consulting with colleagues and preparing an implementation plan for how this work will be taken forward taking consideration of the spending review.

Simon Kirby: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether he plans to invite Martha Lane Fox to review further central Government websites; and if he will make a statement. [28750]

Mr Maude: I have taken a number of steps to review online Government services and the websites used to access these services. These include asking Martha Lane Fox in her role as Digital Champion to review the Directgov Website, and asking Government Departments to review their own websites.

There are no current plans to invite Martha Lane Fox to review further central Government websites.

Simon Kirby: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what recent assessment he has made of the value for money of Government websites. [28751]

Mr Hurd: In June 2010, we published the costs and usage of all central Government Department websites in accordance with the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee. URL ref:

www.coi.gov.uk/websitemetrics2009-10

Electronic Government: Publicity

Simon Kirby: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what steps his Department is taking to encourage people to access Government services online. [29308]

Mr Maude: I have taken a number of steps to review online Government services and the websites used to access these services. These include asking Martha Lane Fox in her role as Digital Champion to review the Directgov Website, and asking Government Departments to review their own websites.

On 23 November I published the report on Directgov prepared by Martha Lane Fox and my response to that report. Copies of both documents are available in the Library. My response outlined plans for making a first wave of Government services 'Digital by Default'—these are:

Job seekers allowance

Services provided by Companies House

Student loan applications

My officials continue to talk with officials from other Departments to identify further services to become Digital by Default.

Work also continues with organisations, such as the Post Office and UK Online centres, on developing 'assisted digital' access to support those who need help to access digital services, to ensure that in making services Digital by Default no-one gets left behind.

Finally, I and my Department continue to support the work being done by Martha Lane Fox and her team under the Race Online 2012 initiative to help get more people online and I would like to see all Government Departments make pledges in support of Race Online 2012.

Heart Disease: Primary Care Trusts

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the mortality rate was in respect of heart disease in each primary care trust in England in each of the last five years. [28921]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the mortality rate was in respect of heart disease in each primary care trust in England in each of the last five years. (28921)

Table 1 provides the age-standardised mortality rate per 100,000 population, where ischaemic heart disease was the underlying cause of death, for each primary care organisation in England, for the years 2005 to 2009 (the latest year available). A copy has been placed in the House of Commons library.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Cultural Relations: Australia

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what his policy is on the repatriation of Australian indigenous human remains held by UK institutions. [28814]

Mr Vaizey: Claims for the repatriation of human remains held in UK collections are for the trustees or governing authorities of the institutions involved to consider and the Government do not intervene. However, in 2005, the Government published, on behalf of the museums sector, 'Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums', which includes advice on dealing with repatriation claims. I am strongly of the view that any institution which currently holds Australian indigenous human remains should do its utmost to return them.

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what discussions he has had with publicly-funded museums on the repatriation of Australian indigenous human remains. [28816]

Mr Vaizey: None.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many Australian indigenous human remains have been repatriated from public bodies since the issuance of UK Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums in 2005. [28817]

Mr Vaizey: The Government do not request this information from UK collections but are aware that a number of successful repatriations have taken place.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport if he will estimate the number of Australian indigenous human remains held in UK institutions. [28818]

Mr Vaizey: The Government do not hold such information. However, the Australian Government estimate that there are approximately 730 Australian indigenous human remains held in at least 18 UK institutions.

Departmental Temporary Employment

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many agency workers his Department and its agencies employ at each pay grade. [28502]

John Penrose: The tables set out the number of agency workers and interim managers employed in the Department and its agency at each pay grade.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

DCMS Grade	*Civil service grade equivalent*	*Agency workers*
Senior civil service	Senior civil service	0
Grade A	Grades 6/7	14
Grade B	Higher executive officer/senior executive officer	0
Grade C	Executive officer	10
Grade D	Administrative officer/administrative assistant	4
Total		28

The Royal Parks (TRP)

TRP Grade	*Civil service grade equivalent*	*Agency workers*
Senior civil service	Senior civil service	0
Grade IV	Grades 6/7	0
Grade III	Higher executive officer/senior executive officer	0
Grade II	Executive officer	3
Grade I	Administrative officer/administrative assistant	2
Total		5

Internet: Further Education

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what assessment he has made of the likely effects of the implementation of the provisions of the Digital Economy Act 2010 on the regulation by colleges of student access to the internet. [28632]

Mr Vaizey: I have been asked to reply in my capacity as a Minister in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

There are simple and proportionate steps that institutions such as colleges can adopt to prevent the use of their networks for the online infringement of copyright. Many already do so and, in many cases, their activities to prevent infringement already go far beyond what the Digital Economy Act requires. We expect that colleges will continue to put in place such measures to prevent infringement on their networks, when the Act is implemented.

Local Press

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what recent assessment he has made of trends in sales of *(a)* local and *(b)* regional newspapers; and if he will make a statement. [29315]

Mr Vaizey: Local and regional newspapers continue to meet the twin challenges of structural and cyclical change. While print circulation is falling, viewing of online news is growing rapidly. The issue is how to successfully monetise this.

The Government announced on 29 November 2010 that we will be carrying out a growth review of the digital and creative industries which will include the publishing sector.

Nicholas Shott: Newsquest

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 838W, if he will place in the Library a copy of the minutes of the meeting between Nicholas Shott and Newsquest. [29399]

Mr Vaizey: Nicholas Shott is undertaking his review of local TV in an independent capacity and any papers relating to the review remain his own. His final conclusions will take account of the meetings he held with various groups of stakeholders. His report will be available on the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's website in due course.

HEALTH

Accidents: Fees and Charges

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the maximum sum per case his Department seeks to recover in respect of charges for NHS treatment of those involved in accidents; on what date the maximum was last reviewed; and if he will review them in order to achieve full recovery of NHS expenses from the insurers of those responsible for such accidents; [29016]

(2) how much the NHS spent on the treatment of those involved in accidents in cases where some or all of the cost of treatment was recovered from the insurers of those held responsible for the accident in each of the last three years; [29017]

(3) how much his Department recovered from insurers in repayment of NHS treatment expenses in respect of those involved in accidents in each of the last three years; and how many cases were involved. [29018]

Mr Simon Burns: The maximum sum that the Department is able to recover for any case under the NHS Injury Costs Recovery scheme is currently £42,999. This is uprated annually in line with hospital and community health service inflation and was last changed in April 2010. The Department continues to monitor the operation of the scheme but has no immediate plans to remove this cap.

Total cases and amounts recovered through the scheme for the last three years for the national health service in England were as follows. Figures reflect the expansion of the scheme to include injury claims other than road traffic accidents in 2007:

	Cases (Thousand)	Income (£ million)
2007-08	147	121
2008-09	160	135
2009-10	182	158

The Department does not hold records of the costs of treatment relating to insured accidents.

Ambulance Services

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he plans to take to ensure that ambulance services commissioned by GP consortia provide a resilient service. [28790]

Mr Simon Burns: The White Paper 'Liberating the NHS' set out our proposals to devolve power and responsibility for commissioning services to local consortiums of general practitioner (GP) practices, supported by the creation of an independent NHS commissioning board.

Consortiums of GP practices working with other health and care professionals will commission the great majority of national health service services including urgent and emergency care and ambulance services for their patients. They will not be directly responsible for commissioning services that GPs themselves provide, nor will they will be responsible for commissioning the other family health services. These will be the responsibility of the NHS Commissioning Board, as will national and regional specialised commissioning.

Our proposals for this new model of commissioning draw on the regular contact that GPs have with patients and their more detailed understanding of patients wider health care needs. The NHS commissioning board will hold GP consortiums to account for both their stewardship of NHS resources and the health outcomes they achieve.

'Liberating the NHS: Commissioning for Patients' invited views on a number of areas of the commissioning agenda. The engagement exercise closed on 11 October and the Department is now analysing all of the contributions received.

Blood

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will assess the merits of introducing pathogen reduction technology as a standard treatment for blood products in the NHS. [29312]

Anne Milton: A pathogen inactivation system is currently used to treat plasma from the United States where levels of viral markers are higher than in the United Kingdom.

A different pathogen inactivation system suitable for platelets was evaluated by the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood Tissues and Organs (SaBTO) in January 2010. Taking into account the available information, with specific reference to efficacy, safety cost effectiveness and potential ancillary benefits, SaBTO does not recommend pathogen inactivation for platelets at this time.

Neither of these pathogen inactivation systems are currently suitable for use with red blood cells.

Blood: Donors

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans to review the appropriateness of the National Blood Service's policy on the donation of blood by men who have had sex with men. [28930]

Anne Milton: The Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO) is currently reviewing the evidence base for donor deferral in relation to sexual behaviours, including the exclusion of men who have ever had sex with men.

The Committee considers that it is extremely important that the work of this group is based on the available scientific evidence and expects to make its recommendations on the most appropriate ways to ensure the safety of the blood supply in early 2011. The Department will consider SaBTO's recommendations once they have been made.

Breast Cancer: Screening

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what treatment tariffs are available to hospitals in respect of breast screening. [28961]

Mr Simon Burns: There are no specific tariffs available to hospitals in respect of breast screening services, which are funded through local contracting arrangements between trusts and primary care Trusts. However, tariffs available for breast biopsy procedures are shown in the following table.

Healthcare resource group code	*Description*	*2010-11 in-patient elective and non-elective tariff (£)*
JA09A	Intermediate breast procedures with complications and comorbidities	1,848
JA09B	Intermediate breast procedures without complications and comorbidities	1,172

Children: Cycling

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the contribution cycling makes to children's health; and if he will make a statement. [29393]

Anne Milton: The Department has not undertaken an assessment of the contribution cycling makes to children's health. However, in 2007 Cycling England reviewed the evidence that supports the health benefits of cycling. The report "Cycling and Health—What's the evidence" indicates that regular physical activity through cycling has positive health benefits for children and young people.

Cycling can contribute to the 60 minutes of daily physical activity recommended under current guidelines for children's general health benefit.

We are reviewing the evidence about the health benefits of physical activity for children and young people and will be producing updated physical activity guidelines in 2011.

Departmental Responsibilities

Mrs Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what meetings *(a)* Ministers, *(b)* special advisers and *(c)* officials in his Department have had with representatives of (i) Diageo, (ii) Kraft, (iii) Unilever, (iv) Kellogg's, (v) Nestle, (vi) McDonalds and (vii) Pepsico since May 2010; [26480]

(2) what meetings *(a)* Ministers, *(b)* special advisers and *(c)* officials in his Department have had with representatives from organisations in the advertising and marketing industries since May 2010. [26481]

Anne Milton: In discharging their official duties, Ministers, special advisers and departmental officials meet with representatives from such organisations in a wide range of forums, including speaking engagements, conferences and seminars.

Other than multi-stakeholder meetings, since May 2010, departmental Ministers have held meetings with Unilever, McDonalds and Unacom, while the Department's special advisers held meetings with Diageo and Kellogg's.

During the same period, departmental officials have held meetings with Diageo, Unilever, Nestle, McDonalds, the Advertising Association, 23Red, Freud Communications, M and C Saatchi, VCCP, MCBD and Fast Track Agency.

Departmental Telephone Services

Angela Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much revenue was received or saved through the use of non-geographic telephone numbers by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the NHS in (i) 2008-09 and (ii) 2009-10; and how much he expects to receive or take from their use in 2010-11. [28792]

Mr Simon Burns: The information requested is not collected centrally. The hon. Member may wish to contact each primary care trust and national health service body for this information.

Epilepsy

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the likely effects of extending the role for national commissioning in the provision of epilepsy services; and if he will make a statement. [28755]

Paul Burstow: It is the responsibility of local health commissioners to ensure that they commission local services to meet the needs of their population living with epilepsy. This includes ensuring that all relevant guidelines, including those issued by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence are able to be implemented where deemed appropriate.

We have made no assessment of the likely effects of extending the role for national commissioning in the provision of epilepsy services.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account he took of *(a)* rates of misdiagnosis of epilepsy, *(b)* access to tertiary referral for epilepsy services, *(c)* rates of avoidable death owing to epilepsy, *(d)* the number of annually-required epilepsy surgeries and *(e)* the number of epilepsy surgeries performed annually when developing the proposals in the Health White Paper, Quality and Excellence: Liberating the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [28756]

Paul Burstow: The White Paper 'Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS' sets out the Government's vision for the national health service. While its proposals will impact patient care across the spectrum of health needs, it does not set out a strategy for individual conditions. The Government consulted widely on the implementation of the White Paper proposals and have received over 6,000 responses from a wide range of individuals and organisations, including patients, clinicians, professional bodies, and epilepsy-related organisations and charities. We will publish our response to the White Paper consultations, including further detail about the implementation of our proposals, in due course.

General Practitioners

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account he plans to take of the views of local authorities on the numbers of GP consortia in their area in approving the establishment of GP consortia. [28791]

Mr Simon Burns: The NHS Commissioning Board will have the duty and powers to authorise consortia, once it is satisfied that they have the necessary arrangements and capacity to fulfil their statutory duties and accountabilities and that there is clarity about the geographical area that they cover. Further details will be set out in the Government's forthcoming response to the consultation on the White Paper "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS".

General Practitioners: Working Hours

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many GPs provide out-of-hours care *(a)* nationally and *(b)* in Milton Keynes. [28959]

Mr Simon Burns: This information is not collected centrally. My hon. Friend may wish to contact each primary care trust for this information.

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what qualifications are required of GPs to enable them to provide out-of-hours care. [28960]

Mr Simon Burns: General practitioners (GPs) providing out of hours care must be on the General Medical Council GP register and on a Primary Care Trust GP Performers List. A trainee must be registered with the General Medical Council with a licence to practise, included on a Primary Care Trust GP Performers List, and supervised by an approved GP clinical supervisor.

In addition, out-of-hours providers have a responsibility to ensure the clinical competence of all employed doctors.

Health Centres: Christchurch

Mr Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) for what reason his Department did not accept the district valuer's assessment of his Department's liability in respect of its leasehold interest in the former health centre premises at Saxon Square, Christchurch; [29394]

(2) what steps he has taken to bring the empty leasehold premises at Saxon Square, Christchurch back into use; what steps he plans to take to *(a)* rectify the dilapidations and *(b)* market the premises; and if he will make a statement. [29395]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department took into account the report from the district valuer when giving consideration to the figure that the landlord was prepared to accept for a surrender of the lease. The proposed surrender payment was also considered by HM Treasury in their role of reviewing spending decisions to ensure value for money and affordability. Their views were reflected in an offer recently made to the landlord with whom discussions continue.

The Department has previously marketed the property; its availability is on the e-PIMS database managed by the Government Property Unit and discussions have been held with the landlord with regard to alternative uses for the property. These discussions will continue and also in respect of required repairs. Further marketing will be undertaken if required.

Health Services: Weather

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 911W, on health services: weather (1) what temporary measures have been necessary; [29169]

(2) whether strategic health authorities have identified operational issues in their area through daily winter reporting; and in respect of which hospital trusts local winter plans have been escalated to mitigate operational issues. [29170]

Mr Simon Burns: It is for individual local health economies to ensure that appropriate services are available for their patients during winter.

The national health service is well versed in winter planning and each year works closely with the Department, through winter leads in strategic health authorities, to anticipate and manage any increased pressure and demands placed on local health economies and social care services throughout the winter period.

As it has done in previous years, the NHS is working in partnership with social care and community organisations to ensure that it has robust local plans in place to deal with anticipated winter pressures. These reflect the escalation processes that are enacted and built on throughout the year, whenever a local health economy experiences pressure.

It is inevitable that there will be occasional peaks in demand during the winter season. This can mean temporary measures (postponing routine elective activity to make way for more urgent cases), are necessary to ensure a safe and effective service is maintained, but these are kept to an absolute minimum.

Herbal Medicine: EU Law

David Tredinnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had on the future use of traditional Chinese medicine and Ayurvedic compound herbal remedies under the provisions of the Traditional Herbal Medicines Directive; and if he will make a statement. [29100]

Mr Simon Burns: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has regular discussions with the Herbal Forum, an umbrella group representing manufacturers' trade associations and practitioners in the herbal sector, about the implementation of the directive on traditional herbal medicinal products. The MHRA has also attended various events where the directive has been discussed.

There is the potential for some herbal medicines from non-western traditions to be registered under the traditional herbal registration scheme. However, many herbal medicines from the traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic sectors are more suitable for supply in the context of a practitioner/patient relationship. The Government are currently considering their overall strategy on professional regulation, including the possibility of establishing a registration scheme for practitioners of these traditional forms of medicine.

David Tredinnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he has made an assessment of the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament concerning the Report on the experience acquired as a result of the application of the provisions of Chapter 2a of Directive 2001/83/EC, as amended by Directive 2004/24/EC, on specific provisions applicable to traditional herbal medicinal products, with particular reference to page 10, paragraph 5; and if he will make a statement. [29352]

Anne Milton: The European directive on traditional herbal medicinal products is intended for relatively low risk manufactured herbal medicines suitable for use without medical supervision. It is unclear that there would currently be sufficient support across the European Union for a much wider initiative to introduce new European legislation lifting or modifying the existing requirements of the medicines regulatory regime in relation to systems of traditional medicine.

The Government are currently considering their overall strategy on professional regulation, including the possibility of establishing a registration scheme for practitioners of these traditional forms of medicine.

Hospitals

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health by how many he expects the number of single patient rooms in NHS hospitals to increase between 2010 and 2015; what estimate he has made of the cost to the NHS of such an increase; and from what sources he expects such costs to be met. [29038]

Mr Simon Burns: The information is not available in the precise format requested.

Each NHS trust makes an informed choice locally regarding the appropriate percentage of single room provision based on practical considerations such as site restrictions, affordability as well as clinical and operational limitations. In some cases, providing single rooms for all patients may not be clinically appropriate. Details of plans for such provisions are not collected centrally. Where possible, as resources allow, hospitals are advised to support patient privacy and help reduce the risk of infection by increasing the number of single rooms.

The cost of providing single patient rooms will be met by the national health service organisation involved as part of the overall cost of the project. Details of such costs are not collected centrally.

Where major NHS capital schemes are approved by the Department, the number of single rooms can be reported. Available data for these schemes, which are under construction or opened shows the single patients rooms provision as follows.

NHS trust site	*Project detail*	*Operational date*	*Proportion of single rooms (percentage)*
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust	Replacement of St Luke's hospital offering general and forensic mental health services	May 2010	100
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	Reconfiguration of acute hospital services	June 2010	37
Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	Rationalisation from two main sites to one at Pinderfields Hospital. Small unit at Pontefract	June 2010	50
Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust	Relocation of Maternity Unit and modernisation of acute services including Diagnostic Treatment Centre in Chelmsford	November 2010	38
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	Modernisation and reconfiguration from four sites to two at Pembury and Maidstone	Quarter 1 2011	100
University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust/Stoke-on Trent NHS Primary Care Trust	Major new build and reconfiguration at University Hospital site	Quarter 4 2012	50
Barts and The London NHS Trust	Acute site rationalisation.	Quarter 4 2013	40
North Bristol NHS Trust	Likely relocation of acute services onto single site	Quarter 1 2014	[1]75
Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NSH Foundation Trust	Reconfiguration of acute hospital services (UC)	November 2010	52

[1] Proposed

Hospitals: Milton Keynes

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the mortality rate is for hospital patients *(a)* on weekdays and *(b)* at weekends (i) nationally and (ii) in Milton Keynes. [28958]

Mr Simon Burns: The information requested is not held centrally. Information about the mortality rate for hospital patients on weekdays and at weekends in Milton Keynes may be available directly from Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Liskeard Community Hospital: Private Finance Initiative

Sheryll Murray: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the running costs of Liskeard Community Hospital was paid to the private finance initiative (PFI) provider in each year from 2005 to 2009; and what estimate he has made of the proportion of running costs that will be paid to the PFI provider in *(a)* 2010 and *(b)* 2011. [27629]

Mr Simon Burns: The information is not available in the format requested. However, data for net operating expenses for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust (PCT) in respect of its private finance initiative (PFI) schemes, is set out in the following table.

Data are not held centrally for 2010-11 or 2011-12.

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly PCT—proportion of total net operating costs relating to PFI

	Percentage of total revenue expenditure relating to PFI
2005-06	0.1
2006-07	0.1
2007-08	0.1
2008-09	0.1
2009-10	0.1

Notes:

1. The percentages provided represent the net operating expenses in respect of PFI schemes as a proportion of total net operating costs.
2. 2005-06 to 2008-09 figures compiled under UK generally accepted accounting practice.
3. 2009-10 figures were compiled under international finance reporting standards under which PFI costs in the audited summarisation schedules of trusts are split between capital repayments and revenue expenditure elements, which does not make a precise like for like comparison with earlier years in this table possible. However, an estimate of the PFI unitary payment for 2009-10 is held centrally by the Department as well as the audited outturn for the net operating costs for the PCT for this year; an estimated percentage figure for this year has therefore been calculated using these two figures.

Source:

Audited summarisation schedules of the PCT for 2005-06 to 2009-10.

Maternity Services

Mr Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many and what percentage of pregnant women normally resident in *(a)* the East Riding of Yorkshire and *(b)* England were transferred to hospitals other than that of their preferred choice due to an insufficient number of neonatal intensive care cots in (i) 2008-09 and (ii) 2009-10; [29101]

(2) what estimate he has made of the cost to the NHS of moving pregnant women normally resident in the East Riding of Yorkshire to hospitals other than their preferred hospital due to insufficient neonatal intensive care facilities in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [29102]

Anne Milton: Information is not collected centrally on the number and percentage of women transferred to hospitals other than their preferred choice. As set out in the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence Quality Standard for Specialist Neonatal Care, networks, commissioners and providers will wish to undertake an annual needs assessment and ensure each network has adequate capacity. This will include ensuring there are appropriate numbers of neonatal intensive care cots.

No estimate has been made on the cost of transferring women to a hospital other than her preferred choice.

Meat and Dairy Products

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans to publish evidence from *(a)* the Food Standards Agency and *(b)* other advisory bodies on the potential effects on (i) public and (ii) animal health of the entry of meat and dairy products from cloned animals to the food chain. [27812]

Anne Milton: The Board of the Food Standards Agency discussed the implications of animal cloning at its open meeting on 15 September 2010. The record of that discussion, including the Agency's advice to Ministers, is available on the Agency's website at:

www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/boardmeetings/boardmeetings2010/100915/boardmins150910

A copy has been placed in the Library. The safety of meat and milk from cloned cattle was subsequently considered by the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes on 25 November 2010 and the Agency issued a news report the same day with the Committee's conclusions. The draft minutes of the Committee's discussion will be published within two weeks of the meeting via its website:

http://acnfp.food.gov.uk

The European Food Safety Authority published a detailed opinion on food safety and other implications of animal cloning in 2008, and this was updated in June 2009 and again in September 2010. These reports can be found at:

www.efsa.europa.eu/en/ahawtopics/topic/cloning.htm

Meat and dairy products from cloned animals or their descendants cannot be distinguished from those obtained from conventional animals and the entry of such products into the food chain would not affect the health of other animals. Advice on cloning from the National Standing Committee on Farm Animal Genetic Resources is available on its website at:

www.defra.gov.uk/fangr/documents/100914-cloning-statement.pdf

The Farm Animal Welfare Council intends to issue an opinion on breeding technologies in 2011 in a follow up to its 2004 report on the welfare implications of breeding and breeding technologies in commercial agriculture. More recent advice specifically on cloning was passed to Ministers in 2007. These reports are both published on the Council's website at:

www.fawc.org.uk/pdf/breedingreport.pdf

and

www.fawc.org.uk/pdf/250107.pdf

Medical Equipment: Expenditure

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS has spent on medical supplies and equipment in each year since 2000. [29036]

Mr Simon Burns: Total revenue expenditure on clinical supplies and services, taken from the national health service (England) summarised accounts, is shown for each year since 1999-2000 in the following table.

Supplies and services clinical

	£000
2009-10	4,777,151
2008-09	4,922,822
2007-08	5,036,713
2006-07	5,042,886
2005-06	5,067,562
2004-05	4,953,088
2003-04	5,325,620
2002-03	4,805,109
2001-02	4,312,459
2000-01	3,878,782
1999-2000	3,435,273

Revenue expenditure on clinical supplies and services is taken to include drugs, dressings, medical and surgical equipment, x-ray equipment and supplies, laboratory equipment, appliances (eg artificial limbs and wheelchair hardware) and the maintenance of equipment. The Department does not collect information that allows capital expenditure on medical equipment to be disaggregated from total capital expenditure.

NHS Litigation Authority

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many claims the National Health Service Litigation Authority settled without proceedings being issued in each of the last three years. [28774]

Mr Simon Burns: The NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA) supplied the information requested in the following table.

Number of claims the NHSLA settled without proceedings being issued from 2007-10

Settlement year	*Number of claims*
2007-08	6,170
2008-09	5,708
2009-10	6,608

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he intends that the NHS Litigation Authority provide insurance cover for private providers of NHS services in the future. [28789]

Mr Simon Burns: The NHS Litigation Authority does not currently provide insurance cover, but provides a discretionary indemnity to members of the statutory schemes established under section 71 of the National Health Service Act 2006. Membership of the schemes is voluntary.

The Department is committed to making sure the same arrangements that provide clinical negligence cover to NHS bodies are also available to other providers that deliver NHS care, including other public sector providers and private providers.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases brought against the National Health Service Litigation Authority were funded by *(a)* legal aid, *(b)* a conditional fee agreement and *(c)* by other forms of funding in each of the last three years; and how many in each category resulted in a compensation payment. [28807]

Mr Simon Burns: The NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA) supplied the information in the following table:

Numbers of overall claims settled by the NHSLA by year and by funding arrangement, including the subset of those claims that were settled with damages

Settlement year	*Legal Aid funded*	*Legal Aid funded and settled with damages*	*Conditional fee arrangement funded*	*Conditional fee arrangement funded and settled with damages*	*Before the event insurance or self funded*	*Before the event insurance or self funded and settled with damages*
2007-08	1,806	1,168	5,135	3,589	1,204	782
2008-09	1,690	1,091	5,065	3,611	1,183	673
2009-10	1,822	1,263	5,843	4,270	1,509	925

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the national health service litigation authority. [28808]

Mr Simon Burns: The Government are committed to ensuring that wherever possible resources are used to support the frontline. For this reason departmental officials are commissioning an industry review of the NHS litigation authority (NHSLA). The review will determine if the introduction of commercial techniques could improve the efficiency and effectiveness with which the NHSLA performs its functions.

The review is due to report in the new year.

NHS: Negligence

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of clinical negligence claims brought in cases where *(a)* the NHS and *(b)* clinicians acting for the NHS have been demonstrated not to have adequately investigated clinical errors in the last 12 months. [28809]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department has not made an estimate of the number of clinical negligence claims brought in cases where the national health service or clinicians acting for the NHS have been demonstrated not to have adequately investigated clinical errors in the last 12 months. Such information is not held centrally.

NHS: Procurement

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to increase the level of commercial skills among staff involved in NHS procurement. [28948]

Mr Simon Burns: It is up to local trusts how they develop and deploy their procurement expertise, according to local needs. However, trusts are able to use collaborative partners to help them with their procurement. These partners include NHS Supply Chain, NHS Commercial Medicines Unit, Buying Solutions and regional Collaborative Procurement Hubs.

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much he expects the NHS to spend on *(a)* procurement processes and *(b)* procured goods and services in each year from 2011-2015. [29037]

Mr Simon Burns: In seeking to improve outcomes for their patients, local national health service commissioner and provider organisations are best placed and free to determine how much of the funding allocated to them they spend on procurement processes and on the procurement of goods and services. As part of this, the NHS will need to consider the scope for improving the efficiency of their procurement, as part of their requirement to deliver total efficiency improvements of up to £20 billion over the next four years.

Public Health

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received from local authorities on the transfer of public health responsibilities from primary care trusts. [26535]

Anne Milton: As part of the consultation of 'Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS', local authorities made a number of representations, both in their own right and through their representative bodies including the Local Government Association and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives. Almost all upper tier local authorities in England and a large proportion of lower tier authorities responded to the consultation.

In general, local authorities strongly supported the transfer of public health functions to local authorities and welcomed the dedicated resources that will follow the transfer of these functions. However, specific representations were made concerning ring-fencing public health resources at the local level, and the need for the public health outcomes framework to be produced in close partnership with local government.

Following publication of the Public Health White Paper 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England', the Government will shortly consult on both the public health outcomes framework and the commissioning and funding for public health. We will continue to work closely with local government during and after the consultation period, to ensure that we address areas of concern.

Responsibility Deal Networks

Mrs Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* individuals, *(b)* companies and *(c)* other organisations have (i) attended and (ii) been invited to attend meetings of the Responsibility Deal Networks on (A) food, (B) alcohol, (C) behaviour changes, (D) physical activity and (E) health at work. [26479]

Anne Milton: A list of attendees at the meetings of the five Public Health Responsibility Deal networks has been placed in the Library.

Strokes

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many readmissions to hospital there were within 28 days of discharge in respect of patients originally admitted for stroke in each primary care trust in England in each of the last five years. [28920]

Mr Simon Burns: Data for financial years 2004-05 to 2008-09 showing the number of 'Emergency readmissions to hospital within 28 days of discharge: Stroke (ICD 10 codes: 161 to 164)' (all ages, persons) are shown in the following table.

These data were sourced from NHSnet version of the Compendium of Clinical and Health Indicators:

www.nchod.nhs.uk

Where the number of readmissions in a year is between one and five inclusive, data for that primary care trust (PCT) have been suppressed in the table and replaced with 'X'. This is in line with the Hospital Episode Statistics protocol.

Primary care organisation of residence		*Number of readmissions*				
PCO code	*PCO name*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*
5A3	South Gloucestershire PCT	26	71	106	29	24
5A4	Havering PCT	15	19	32	31	23
5A5	Kingston PCT	9	14	17	11	13
5A7	Bromley PCT	29	44	43	27	28
5A8	Greenwich Teaching PCT	26	13	19	19	23
5A9	Barnet PCT	26	39	30	13	32
5AT	Hillingdon PCT	19	24	17	21	24
5C1	Enfield PCT	32	24	23	15	40
5C2	Barking and Dagenham PCT	11	10	15	11	8
5C3	City and Hackney Teaching PCT	14	7	13	12	11
5C4	Tower Hamlets PCT	19	14	18	14	15
5C5	Newham PCT	21	12	21	15	17
5C9	Haringey Teaching PCT	11	13	38	28	34
5CC	Blackburn With Darwen PCT	9	12	9	17	8
5CN	Herefordshire PCT	11	20	18	12	X
5CQ	Milton Keynes PCT	19	20	X	15	23
5D7	Newcastle PCT	29	46	28	19	22
5D8	North Tyneside PCT	18	18	15	25	25
5D9	Hartlepool PCT	8	15	12	19	19
5E1	Stockton-on-Tees Teaching PCT	28	19	19	18	25
5EF	North Lincolnshire PCT	13	8	12	10	21
5EM	Nottingham City PCT	31	25	14	18	36
5ET	Bassetlaw PCT	11	13	8	9	6
5F1	Plymouth Teaching PCT	11	14	13	25	20
5F5	Salford PCT	35	40	42	45	41
5F7	Stockport PCT	35	30	33	38	54
5FE	Portsmouth City Teaching PCT	12	19	20	14	13
5FL	Bath and North East Somerset PCT	19	28	22	21	18
5GC	Luton PCT	17	16	17	9	20
5H1	Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	11	10	18	16	15

Primary care organisation of residence		*Number of readmissions*				
PCO code	*PCO name*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*
5H8	Rotherham PCT	26	38	45	31	38
5HG	Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT	33	30	32	21	35
5HP	Blackpool PCT	11	15	10	10	12
5HQ	Bolton PCT	20	22	14	21	22
5HX	Ealing PCT	32	18	34	30	27
5HY	Hounslow PCT	20	20	7	22	18
5J2	Warrington PCT	13	9	10	21	26
5J4	Knowsley PCT	22	23	19	13	18
5J5	Oldham PCT	29	35	29	31	25
5J6	Calderdale PCT	16	22	20	16	20
5J9	Darlington PCT	7	11	12	11	14
5JE	Barnsley PCT	21	33	26	15	28
5JX	Bury PCT	14	13	23	22	16
5K3	Swindon PCT	15	13	12	15	21
5K5	Brent Teaching PCT	20	23	27	19	39
5K6	Harrow PCT	18	11	14	13	20
5K7	Camden PCT	24	17	16	15	16
5K8	Islington PCT	13	10	26	18	23
5K9	Croydon PCT	44	33	29	25	31
5KF	Gateshead PCT	23	16	18	24	30
5KG	South Tyneside PCT	11	9	11	11	19
5KL	Sunderland Teaching PCT	22	26	29	16	20
5KM	Middlesbrough PCT	22	9	17	21	24
5L1	Southampton City PCT	13	14	6	21	23
5L3	Medway PCT	23	23	28	29	28
5LA	Kensington and Chelsea PCT	12	20	13	16	19
5LC	Westminster PCT	19	25	18	21	20
5LD	Lambeth PCT	22	22	18	20	27
5LE	Southwark PCT	22	16	15	17	35
5LF	Lewisham PCT	20	25	41	41	38
5LG	Wandsworth Teaching PCT	26	24	17	26	30
5LH	Tameside and Glossop PCT	30	26	33	24	30
5LQ	Brighton and Hove City Teaching PCT	20	36	30	32	27
5M1	South Birmingham PCT	22	29	30	30	37
5M2	Shropshire County PCT	28	30	22	27	28
5M3	Walsall Teaching PCT	24	34	31	38	40
5M6	Richmond and Twickenham PCT	12	12	X	8	19
5M7	Sutton and Merton PCT	35	26	26	38	38
5M8	North Somerset PCT	21	24	40	20	19
5MD	Coventry Teaching PCT	28	22	24	25	24
5MK	Telford and Wrekin PCT	12	22	16	19	25
5MV	Wolverhampton City PCT	31	24	19	21	28
5MX	Heart of Birmingham Teaching PCT	19	23	22	35	54
5N1	Leeds PCT	98	69	61	53	70
5N2	Kirklees PCT	32	31	37	29	28
5N3	Wakefield District PCT	29	46	35	43	37
5N4	Sheffield PCT	54	70	59	70	63
5N5	Doncaster PCT	32	40	37	28	27
5N6	Derbyshire County PCT	73	63	66	58	73
5N7	Derby City PCT	17	25	23	19	34
5N8	Nottinghamshire County Teaching PCT	49	60	49	63	66
5N9	Lincolnshire Teaching PCT	73	104	73	77	69
5NA	Redbridge PCT	15	33	21	31	16
5NC	Waltham Forest PCT	10	22	23	15	33
5ND	County Durham PCT	36	41	45	51	57
5NE	Cumbria Teaching PCT	67	58	61	52	64
5NF	North Lancashire PCT	21	34	30	27	27
5NG	Central Lancashire PCT	21	50	50	44	72
5NH	East Lancashire Teaching PCT	33	33	28	32	46
5NJ	Sefton PCT	59	41	33	47	36
5NK	Wirral PCT	48	52	49	50	55
5NL	Liverpool PCT	61	65	55	76	62
5NM	Halton and St Helens PCT	30	36	23	19	41
5NN	Western Cheshire PCT	28	21	27	26	17
5NP	Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT	28	34	23	37	43
5NQ	Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale PCT	22	22	30	25	22
5NR	Trafford PCT	15	13	11	24	21
5NT	Manchester PCT	48	44	49	61	55
5NV	North Yorkshire and York PCT	70	64	62	67	71
5NW	East Riding of Yorkshire PCT	26	21	19	34	46
5NX	Hull Teaching PCT	23	20	20	25	24
5NY	Bradford and Airedale Teaching PCT	45	52	52	58	59
5P1	South East Essex PCT	41	54	38	38	45
5P2	Bedfordshire PCT	28	27	21	26	32
5P3	East and North Hertfordshire PCT	33	33	31	36	38
5P4	West Hertfordshire PCT	45	51	52	46	64
5P5	Surrey PCT	78	74	102	114	126
5P6	West Sussex PCT	90	83	99	69	80
5P7	East Sussex Downs and Weald PCT	36	26	24	41	43
5P8	Hastings and Rother PCT	25	36	48	29	42
5P9	West Kent PCT	53	66	68	66	74
5PA	Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT	38	52	65	78	74
5PC	Leicester City PCT	16	27	21	37	28
5PD	Northamptonshire Teaching PCT	67	51	52	45	62
5PE	Dudley PCT	22	29	38	29	31
5PF	Sandwell PCT	26	44	37	35	32
5PG	Birmingham East and North PCT	39	41	56	67	71
5PH	North Staffordshire PCT	14	8	16	16	27
5PJ	Stoke On Trent PCT	27	17	28	22	34

Primary care organisation of residence		*Number of readmissions*				
PCO code	*PCO name*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*
5PK	South Staffordshire PCT	52	48	44	67	54
5PL	Worcestershire PCT	54	44	43	46	77
5PM	Warwickshire PCT	52	54	39	31	57
5PN	Peterborough PCT	17	13	13	14	17
5PP	Cambridgeshire PCT	42	51	45	54	51
5PQ	Norfolk PCT	62	54	60	70	75
5PR	Great Yarmouth and Waveney PCT	22	36	18	18	30
5PT	Suffolk PCT	57	55	63	66	70
5PV	West Essex PCT	25	23	33	33	32
5PW	North East Essex PCT	29	48	33	25	38
5PX	Mid Essex PCT	34	33	33	32	31
5PY	South West Essex PCT	35	31	34	30	25
5QA	Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT	69	83	90	101	109
5QC	Hampshire PCT	93	107	79	109	116
5QD	Buckinghamshire PCT	40	41	25	49	37
5QE	Oxfordshire PCT	55	42	36	45	56
5QF	Berkshire West PCT	31	23	30	20	28
5QG	Berkshire East PCT	24	24	32	22	38
5QH	Gloucestershire PCT	51	65	56	47	64
5QJ	Bristol PCT	35	85	110	65	37
5QK	Wiltshire PCT	43	38	41	31	36
5QL	Somerset PCT	56	69	67	55	63
5QM	Dorset PCT	52	51	36	47	58
5QN	Bournemouth and Poole Teaching PCT	32	50	38	40	37
5QP	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly PCT	55	69	52	49	54
5QQ	Devon PCT	68	80	70	72	76
5QR	Redcar and Cleveland PCT	24	19	12	19	14
5QT	Isle of Wight NHS PCT	13	12	9	7	23
TAC	Northumberland Care Trust	39	65	57	39	45
TAK	Bexley Care Trust	18	21	36	24	[illegible]
TAL	Torbay Care Trust	17	14	23	19	19
TAM	Solihull Care Trust North East Lincolnshire Care Trust	17	26	23	33	27
TAN	Plus	10	14	X	12	10

EDUCATION

Academies

Luciana Berger: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many schools have been removed from the list of those expressing an interest in becoming an academy because they were included in error. [10599]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 8 December 2010]:* Any school may choose to register an interest in becoming an academy, and equally they may request that their interest is de-registered at any time. We do not collect information on why they have asked that their interest is withdrawn, and we no longer publish such a list. We do, however, on a monthly basis publish the total number of schools which have registered an interest in converting to academy status and the names of those which have formally applied. This was last updated on 3 December and the link can be found on the Academies pages of the Department's website:

www.education.gov.uk

under the heading "Schools submitting applications and open academies".

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many schools he estimates will have signed academy agreements under the terms of the Academies Act 2010 by September 2010. [12554]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 6 September 2010]:* As at 30 September 2010, 144 Academy Orders had been signed covering 152 schools.

Building Schools for the Future Programme: Coventry

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will estimate the costs incurred by schools in Coventry in respect of their preparation and presentation of bids for inclusion in the Building Schools for the Future programme. [27460]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 1 December 2010]:* No estimate has been made by the Department of the costs incurred by schools in Coventry in preparing and presenting bids for BSF projects and we have no plans to estimate them.

The design of the BSF programme meant that significant sums had to be spent by schools before contracts were finalised. We have terminated the BSF programme to prevent waste of that kind. The review of DfE capital led by Sebastian James is looking at alternative designs to avoid waste.

Children: Communication Skills

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will *(a)* prioritise communication competency in his forthcoming schools White Paper and *(b)* assess the merits of including communication competency as a measurable outcome in the school curriculum; and if he will make a statement. [23617]

Mr Gibb: We are determined to create an education system that delivers high standards for all children, and communication skills are an important part of this. All aspects of communication competence are built into the curriculum framework for English in primary schools and are subject to assessment at key stages 1 and 2. The schools White Paper focuses on a range of key issues including the curriculum. Copies of the schools White Paper can be found in the House of Commons Library and also at the following link:

http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=CM+7980&

We will be announcing plans for a review of the national curriculum shortly.

Discretionary Learner Support Fund

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education when he plans to announce the mechanisms by which the discretionary learner support fund will operate in the 2011-12 academic year; and what guidance his Department plans to issue to further education institutions on that fund. [26464]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 25 November 2010]:* We plan to allocate the enhanced funding in line with the timetable for overall funding allocations for schools and colleges, which will be made by the end of March 2011.

We will work with representatives of schools, colleges and training providers to finalise the arrangements for the enhanced fund, including how the funding will flow to institutions and what guidance is required to administer the fund effectively.

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether his Department will retain responsibility for the funding allocated to the discretionary learner support fund when it replaces education maintenance allowance. [26465]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 25 November 2010]:* The Department for Education will be responsible for the new enhanced discretionary learner support fund. The Young People's Learning Agency will allocate funding to schools, colleges and training providers on the Department's behalf.

Teresa Pearce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what funding formula will be used to allocate funding from the discretionary learner support fund to schools, colleges and sixth forms; and whether additional costs in respect of administration of that fund will be met separately from the funding for students. [26578]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 25 November 2010]:* We expect the administration of the enhanced discretionary learner support fund to be based on existing arrangements for such funds, which allow schools, colleges and training providers to target support to those young people in greatest need.

Under current arrangements, schools and colleges are able to use up to 5% of their allocation to meet the costs of administration. In finalising the arrangements for the enhanced discretionary learner support scheme the Department will consult with schools, colleges and training organisations.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether there will be an automatic entitlement to financial support through the discretionary learner support fund in the academic year 2011-12 for students *(a)* with special educational needs, *(b)* who are looked after by the local authority and (c) who have a physical or mental disability. [26433]

Mr Gibb: Decisions regarding the new discretionary fund will be made locally, enabling schools, colleges and training providers to target support at those young people in greatest need.

In finalising the arrangements for the enhanced discretionary learner support, the Department will consult with schools, colleges and training organisations and other interested parties, including on how to ensure that the most vulnerable young people, who are facing genuine financial barriers to participation, receive appropriate support to enable them to continue in education or training.

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how student need will be defined in relation to eligibility for assistance from the discretionary learner support fund in the academic year 2011-12. [26436]

Mr Gibb: Decisions regarding the new discretionary fund will be made locally, enabling schools, colleges and training providers to target support at those young people in greatest need. The Government do not intend to dictate to schools, colleges and training providers how they should determine which young people should benefit from the new fund.

In finalising the arrangements for the enhanced discretionary learner support fund, the Department will consult with schools, colleges and training organisations, including on what guidance is required to administer the fund effectively.

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what consultation he has undertaken with *(a)* further education colleges, *(b)* young people and *(c)* local authorities on the ending of education maintenance allowance. [26437]

Mr Gibb: The Government took the decision to end the education maintenance allowance (EMA) on the basis of evaluation and other research evidence which indicates that the scheme does not effectively target those young people who need financial support to enable them to participate in education and training.

The changes have been discussed with the Learner Support Consultative Forum, operated by the Young People's Learning Agency, which involves representatives of young people and of colleges. In finalising the arrangements for the enhanced discretionary learner support scheme that will replace EMA, the Department will consult with schools, colleges, training organisations and other interested parties.

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for North West Durham on 15 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 592W, on education maintenance allowance, on what date the discretionary learner support fund will begin issuing funding to students; what mechanisms will be in place for student support before grants from for that fund are made available for the next academic year; and if he will make a statement. [26438]

Mr Gibb: The new enhanced discretionary learner support fund will be introduced for the start of the 2011/12 academic year. All young people who apply for an education maintenance allowance (EMA) before 1 January 2011 and are assessed as eligible may continue to receive EMA through to the end of the 2010/11 academic year (providing they meet any conditions set by their school, college or training provider). Discretionary funding is also available in 2010/11 under current arrangements.

We plan to allocate the enhanced funding in line with the timetable for overall funding allocations, which will be made by the end of March 2011.

Education Maintenance Allowance: Greater London

Teresa Pearce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent estimate he has made of the proportion of young people entering an institution of further education in the 2011-12 academic year who will receive financial support from the Government. [26505]

Mr Gibb: Decisions regarding the new discretionary fund will be made locally, enabling schools, colleges and training providers to target support at those young people in greatest need. It is not, therefore, possible to estimate the proportion of young people entering an institution of further education in the 2011-12 academic year who will receive support under the new arrangements.

The current discretionary scheme supports around 200,000 young people each year.

Education Maintenance Allowance: Stoke-on-Trent

Tristram Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many young people resident in Stoke-on-Trent Central constituency have received education maintenance allowance since its creation. [26990]

Mr Gibb: This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who operate the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, will write to the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent Central with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Libraries.

Tristram Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many young people resident in Stoke-on-Trent Central constituency receive education maintenance allowance. [26991]

Mr Gibb: This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who operate the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, will write to the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Libraries.

Education: Assessments

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what *(a)* methodology and *(b)* tools were used to assess the progress of children who did not sit SATs in 2010; and whether the baseline against which such assessments were made was adjusted to take account of those children who did not sit SATs; and if he will make a statement. [24371]

Mr Gibb: In 2010, 4,005 maintained schools did not administer the key stage 2 national curriculum tests, representing 26% of the 15,515 schools expected to administer them. It is unfortunate that parents and pupil in those schools will not have benefited from the information that the test results provide. At the end of key stage 2, schools are also required to report a teacher assessment result to parents.

The Department published the national key stage 2 test results on 3 August. Information on progression in English and Mathematics between key stage 1 and key stage 2 was published on 7 October. This information is based on pupils who sat the tests in 2010 and can be viewed at:

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000949/index.shtml

The Department's chief statistician has confirmed that the 2010 national key stage 2 test results are representative of the national picture and comparable to previous years.

Families: Advisory Services

Margot James: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has for *(a)* the future and *(b)* future funding of the Family Information Direct programme. [26864]

Sarah Teather: I appreciate the hard work of the organisations that have been funded through the Family Information Direct programme to deliver support to families. As the National Prospectus published by my Department on 22 November 2010 states, we are currently considering inviting bids for a range of future family services delivered online and through telephone services from April 2011; and further information will be available in due course.

Free Schools: Inspections

Mr Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent discussions he has had with Ofsted on procedures for registering and monitoring free schools. [24019]

Mr Gibb: The Department has regular discussions with Ofsted on a range of matters including free schools. As independent schools, free schools, like academies will be subject to a pre-registration inspection, which occurs under section 160(4) of the Education Act 2002. Once open, in the same way as academies, free schools will be subject to regular inspection by Ofsted under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Section 5 inspections apply to maintained schools and academies.

Free Schools: Playgrounds

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what his policy is on the provision of outdoor play space at free schools. [20740]

Mr Gibb: Free schools are subject to the requirements of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. These regulations require that there should be appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for pupils to play safely.

The terms of reference for the current review of capital investment in schools, early years, colleges and sixth forms include the review and reform of the requirements on schools including regulations, design requirements and playing field requirements.

New Schools Network

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education pursuant to the answer of 6 September 2010, *Official Report*, column 350W, on the New Schools Network, what meetings *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in his Department have had with representatives of the New Schools Network since 30 June 2010. [22408]

Mr Gibb: Ministers met New Schools Network (NSN) representatives on 1 October, 12 October, 20 October and 10 November 2010. Officials meet NSN on a regular basis to review proposals they have receive.

Pupils: Disadvantaged

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the number of children who would qualify for the proposed pupil premium under each of the three possible sets of criteria set out in his Department's consultation document. [22779]

Mr Gibb: The three options set out in the consultation documents were (a) Free School Meals—either for those eligible in-year; for those eligible in any of the last three years, or for those eligible in any of the last six years—(b) for those children whose parents receive the Out of Work Tax Credit, or (c) using a geodemographic measure such as ACORN or MOSAIC.

For the Free School Meals and Out of Work Tax Credit options, the approximate numbers are as follows:

Option	*Pupils qualifying*
FSM in-year (16%)	1,079,000
FSM ever 3 (19%)	1,281,000
FSM ever 6 (24%)	1,618,000
Out of Work Tax Credit (20%)	1,348,000

Notes:

1. These figures are rounded to the nearest 1,000.
2. Based upon a total pupil population of 6,741,607 FTE pupils (which is Reception to Year-11 pupils in mainstream settings funded through the DSG plus those in academies).
3. Figures are for 2010-11, because this was the basis for the other figures included in the consultation document.
4. These figures are intended only for use in comparing between these four options.

ACORN and MOSAIC are geographical based measures and the number of children who would qualify for the premium would depend on which groups and postcodes are used.

There was a range of responses to the consultation with each option having its supporters. These are being considered and we expect to make an announcement shortly.

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the funding likely to be allocated to schools in Newham through the proposed Pupil Premium. [26487]

Mr Gibb: We are considering the responses to the consultation on school funding which ended on 18 October, including the question of which deprivation indicator to use. The amount of funding that will be allocated to schools in a constituency will depend on this decision.

Runaway Children

Ann Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education by what mechanisms local authorities collect data on the number of children who run away from *(a)* home and *(b)* care; and how many children have run away from (a) home and (b) care in each local authority area in each of the last 30 years. [21424]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 4 November 2010]*: Local police forces are currently required to share data from the Police National Computer (PNC) on the numbers of missing young people reported to them with the Missing Persons' Bureau in the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA). It is for local authorities to then determine the best ways to work with the police to collate the data on numbers of runaways in their area, whether from home or from care.

It is not known how many children have run away from home or care in each local authority in each of the last 30 years as this information is not collected centrally.

School Food Trust

Mrs Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what functions with respect to school meals his Department will have responsibility for when the School Food Trust becomes a charity; [23219]

(2) what assets are held by the School Food Trust; and whether these will revert to his Department when the Trust becomes a charity; [23220]

(3) for what reasons he proposes to convert the School Food Trust to a charity; [23221]

(4) under what circumstances the School Food Trust will become a community interest company; and what assessment he has made of the potential effects such a change of status will have for *(a)* schools and *(b)* pupils. [23222]

Sarah Teather *[holding answer 11 November 2010]*: The School Food Trust was established as a charity in 2005. From 1 April 2011, it will cease to be an arm's length body, but will continue as a charity. The School Food Trust also plans to set up a community interest company to work alongside the charity.

The Government's review of the School Food Trust, as part of its wider review of arm's length bodies, concluded that schools, local authorities and others would continue to benefit from expert advice about school food, but that this need not come directly from Government. The School Food Trust will therefore continue to have an important role to play in supporting schools and local authorities to meet national nutritional standards for school lunches.

This reflects the Government's commitment to ensuring that pupils can eat healthy, nutritious food. The School Food Trust will continue to work for the benefit of schools and pupils by giving advice, including to government, informed by its expertise and by the practical work it does out in the field.

The Government and the School Food Trust are continuing to work through the practical and legal issues, such as the ownership of assets, in time for its change of status from next April.

The Department for Education will continue to have policy responsibility for the nutritional standards for school food and for the provision of school meals.

Schools

Mr Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many secondary schools in England are *(a)* community, *(b)* voluntary-aided, *(c)* voluntary-controlled, *(d)* foundation, *(e)* academy and *(f)* city technology colleges; and how many schools in each category offer vocational educational courses to 14 and 15-year-olds. [22383]

Mr Gibb: The Department does not hold information on the courses offered by secondary schools but does hold information on the qualifications entered. The following table gives the number of secondary schools with pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 in each category that were published in the 2009 Achievement and Attainment Tables and the proportion of these schools that had at least one entry in a vocational qualification.

School type	*No. of schools with at least one pupil at the end of KS4*	*No. of schools with entries in vocational qualifications[1] (including general vocational qualifications[2])*	*% of schools with entries in vocational qualifications[1] (including general vocational qualifications[2])*	*No. of schools with entries in vocational qualifications[1] (excluding general vocational qualifications[2])*	*% of schools with entries in vocational qualifications[1] (excluding general vocational qualifications[2])*
Community	1,619	1,613	99.6	1,608	99.3
Voluntary Aided	515	503	97.7	499	96.9
Voluntary Controlled	81	81	100.0	81	100.0
Foundation	743	723	97.3	718	96.6
Academy	123	121	98.4	120	97.6
City Technology College	3	3	100.0	3	100.0

[1] Vocational qualifications include NVQs, BTEC First Certificates and Diplomas, OCR National Awards and Certificates and other vocationally related qualifications at levels 1 and 2.

[2] General vocational qualifications include vocational GCSE single and double awards and GNVQs.

Schools: Asbestos

John Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) if he will commission an assessment of the risks from asbestos in schools to *(a)* children and *(b)* other occupants; [27283]

(2) what estimate he has made of the *(a)* extent, *(b)* type and *(c)* condition of asbestos present in the fabric of maintained schools; [27284]

(3) what measures he has put in place to identify asbestos in *(a)* secondary and *(b)* primary schools during refurbishment work; [27285]

(4) what measures he has put in place to prioritise those schools with the most dangerous asbestos for refurbishment or replacement works; [27294]

(5) what measures he has put in place to remove asbestos when refurbishment takes place in *(a)* secondary and *(b)* primary schools; and if he will make a statement. [27295]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 30 November 2010]:* The Department has no plans to commission an assessment of the risks from asbestos in schools. The Government Scientific Advisory Committee Working Group on Action to Control Chemicals (WATCH), which considers all aspects of risk from toxic chemicals including asbestos, is currently examining the risks of lung cancer and mesothelioma from low level exposure to asbestos fibres. Their findings will be made known to the recently formed Asbestos in Schools Steering Group chaired by the Department.

On the numbers of maintained schools containing Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs), I refer you to the answer given to me on the 4 June 2009, *Official Report*, column 657W, by the former Minister of State for Schools. This stated that:

> "Our best estimate in September 2008 was that around 70% of school buildings contain some ACMs."

These schools are likely to contain a range of ACMs, e.g. moulded or preformed asbestos in the lagging used as thermal insulation on pipes and boilers; asbestos insulating board used for fire protection, thermal insulation, partitioning and ducts; and asbestos-containing floor tiles and textured coatings. The responsibility to assess the condition of ACMs falls to the duty holder under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006.

Under the Control of Asbestos Regulations, statutory duties are placed on those who are responsible for repair and maintenance of non-domestic premises. In a maintained school, the duty holder is normally the maintaining local authority—where there is delegated funding this duty is often shared with the head teacher. For academies, voluntary aided and foundation schools, the duty holder is the school's governing body. For independent schools, it is the proprietor, governors or trustees. The Department is working with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and asbestos training providers to produce training for head teachers to make sure they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

A recent questionnaire survey and follow-up work of HSE shows that the majority of local authorities were managing asbestos in their schools. Formal enforcement action in the form of 18 improvement notices and one prohibition notice was taken against 10 local authorities requiring improvements to their asbestos management arrangements. The reports of this work and the letter to local authorities reminding them of their responsibilities under the Control of Asbestos Regulations can be found at:

www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/information.htm#asbestos

It is for the duty holder to assess, with expert advice, the action which needs to be taken when buildings are refurbished, depending on the location of the asbestos materials in relation to the location, nature and extent of the works to be carried out. Removal, encapsulation, repair or management in situ may all be appropriate actions. Responsibility for prioritisation of specific projects rests with individual schools and local authorities.

Asbestos does not pose a serious risk if it is in good condition and managed in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations. HSE does not recommend the routine removal of asbestos. Its advice remains that, providing that ACMs are maintained in good condition, they can be left in situ and managed until a building reaches the end of its life, at which time ACMs can be removed without risks to building users who would otherwise be exposed to fibres arising from significant disturbance.

Schools: Meat

Mr Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will review levels of meat consumption in schools for the purpose of improving public health. [23134]

Sarah Teather: The Government have no plans to review the levels of meat consumption in schools. School food must meet the nutritional standards.

Pupils need the right balance of food and nutrients to develop and grow. The nutrient-based standards have been designed to make the food offered healthier by increasing the vitamin and mineral content and by decreasing the fat, saturated fat and salt content. Meat is a good source of protein, vitamins and minerals, such as iron and zinc.

The regulations which set the standards do not specify that schools must provide meat options or vegetarian options. Schools should make every effort to cater for all pupils' needs in order to provide a popular, viable service that is also compliant with the standards. In doing so, many will want to take account of environmental and health considerations.

Young People: Crime

Mr Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much funding his Department has allocated for youth crime provision in London in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and what estimate he made of the amount of such funding allocated in respect of young people aged *(a)* 12 years and under, *(b)* between 13 and 17 years and *(c)* between 18 and 24 years in 2009-10. [24628]

Tim Loughton: For 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 allocated funded for youth crime provision in London is set out as in the following table:

				£
Programme	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*2010-11*	*Total*
Intensive Intervention programme (2 projects)	450,000	450,000	450,000	1,350,000
Challenge and support (11 programmes)	1,100,000	825,000	825,000	2,750,000
				4,100,000

In the same period 13 London boroughs were allocated the following for youth crime provision:

	£
2008-09	65,000
2009-10[1]	350,000
2010-11[1]	350,000

[1] This includes funding allocated for Family Intervention (FIPs) and Think Family reforms. FIPs and Think Family reforms are not solely aimed at youth crime.

This funding was allocated from a joint pot from the Home Office, Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the then named Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) under the Youth Crime Action Plan to tackle offending by young people aged under 18.

The Ministry of Justice has provided the following amounts to London Youth Offending Teams over the last five years:

	£
2009/10	24,428,567
2008/09	23,572,365
2007/08	21,311,756
2006/07	19,983,897
2005/06	17,118,846

These figures include funding from both the Home Office and the Department but cannot be separated out due to disproportionate cost, and are not broken down by age range.

In addition the Department also allocated £4.1 million in 08-09 and £3 million in 2009-10 to the Youth Justice Board to support Intensive Fostering Pilots.

It is not possible to provide a break down for different age categories of young people beyond the broad distinctions set out above.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 9 December 2010

NORTHERN IRELAND

Bill of Rights

Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of proposals for a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. [29185]

Mr Swire: There remains a clear lack of consensus amongst political representatives in Northern Ireland on proposals for a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and the issue of supplementary rights for Northern Ireland more generally. I will continue to consider how best to address this issue but would urge all sides to work together to build consensus on how best to proceed.

Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he plans to publish the results of his Department's consultation on a Northern Ireland Bill of Rights. [29186]

Mr Swire: My officials are currently preparing the responses to the previous Government's consultation for publication, and I hope to be in a position to publish very shortly.

Economic Situation

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) when the Government expect to bring forward their proposals for rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy; [29206]

(2) what economic proposals he has for an enterprise zone in Northern Ireland; and whether the Government plan to include a reduction in corporation tax as part of such proposals. [29248]

Mr Paterson: We shall bring forward a Treasury paper on these issues shortly, following full discussion with Northern Ireland Ministers.

Public Expenditure

Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to meet the First Minister and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland to discuss the effects of the outcome of the comprehensive spending review on *(a)* public sector jobs in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Northern Ireland economy. [29183]

Mr Paterson: I meet the First and Deputy First Minister regularly and discuss a range of subjects at their and my request. These discussions have included the spending review and the economic situation in Northern Ireland.

Saville Inquiry: Finance

Dr Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Saville Inquiry spent on IT equipment up to February 2010; and how such equipment was disposed of at the end of the inquiry. [28956]

Mr Paterson: I am advised that the Bloody Sunday Inquiry spent in the region of £2.9 million on IT equipment between 1998 and 2010. This figure reflects departmental capital accounting policy which is to capitalise all IT equipment if the useful life of the equipment is greater than one year and the cost, including VAT, is greater than £1,000. Figures relating to expenditure by the Bloody Sunday Inquiry are available on the Northern Ireland Office website:

www.nio.gov.uk

Upon the closure of the inquiry, it was apparent that the majority of the IT equipment had reached the end of its useful economic life and as such was disposed of securely. Other IT equipment which retained its functionality and value was transferred to other areas of the Department for use elsewhere.

JUSTICE

Prisoners: Voting Rights

Thomas Docherty: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 165, if he will publish each item of correspondence between him and Scottish Ministers on prisoners' voting rights. [27172]

Mr Kenneth Clarke: I will reply to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Substantive answer from Kenneth Clarke to Thomas Docherty:

I correspond regularly with Scottish Ministers on justice matters, although I have not to date exchanged specific correspondence regarding prisoner voting rights.

Once decisions have been made about how to implement prisoner voting rights, the Government will announce them to the House in the normal way, and of course intends to engage with the Scottish Government on implementation.

INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENTARY STANDARDS AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Contracts: Employment

Bob Russell: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, whether contracts of employment signed by Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority staff include conditions relating to confidentiality; and if he will make a statement. [29703]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking whether contracts of employment signed by Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority staff include conditions relating to confidentiality.

All IPSA staff are required to sign contracts of employment which include conditions relating to confidentiality. All staff have also signed a separate confidentiality agreement.

Members: Expenses

Bob Russell: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, what steps have been taken to investigate allegations that informal media briefings were provided prior to the publication of Parliamentary expenses information on 2 December 2010; and if he will make a statement. [29714]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking what steps have been taken to investigate allegations that informal media briefings were provided prior to the publication of Parliamentary expenses information on 2 December 2010.

I take any allegations about improper behaviour by members of IPSA's staff, from whatever source, extremely seriously. Following those made in the House of Commons on 2 December relating to briefing of journalists, I took appropriate steps to investigate these and I have seen no evidence supporting these allegations. I therefore fully endorse the statement made by IPSA's Chair on 2 December refuting them.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Church Commissioners Annual Report 2009

Helen Goodman: To ask the hon. Member for Banbury, representing the Church Commissioners, with reference to the Church Commissioners Annual Report 2009, page 34, if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* market valuation of other see houses as at 31 December 2008, *(b)* latest annual valuation by Gurr Jones of the most valuable and historic items at Lambeth Palace and see houses and *(c)* December 2007 valuation by Gurr Jones of the remaining historic items at Lambeth Palace and see houses. [25428]

Tony Baldry: The Church Commissioners are not in a position to publish the valuation information of any see houses or the Gurr Jones documents due to the commercially sensitive nature of the valuations.

Church Of England: Finance

Helen Goodman: To ask the hon. Member for Banbury, representing the Church Commissioners, what the overheads and running cost to the Church of England were of Lambeth Palace in the latest period for which figures are available. [25191]

Tony Baldry: The House of Bishops most recent figures for the costs of running the bishops' offices were published in October 2010. The Church Commissioners spent £5.9 million on maintaining the houses, office premises and gardens of the archbishops and diocesan bishops. Out of that £5.9 million the running costs for Lambeth Palace during 2009 stand at £622,813. The running costs include the salary costs for gardeners and domestic staff. It also includes garden equipment, maintenance, and heating, lighting and cleaning for those parts of the palace that are not the Archbishop's residence. The cost of running the Archbishop's Office in 2009 was £2.6 million this included the cost of support staff and working costs.

Churches: Finance

Helen Goodman: To ask the hon. Member for Banbury, representing the Church Commissioners, which *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land holdings in the church estate have a monetary value (i) between £5 million and £10 million and (ii) more than £10 million. [25197]

Tony Baldry: A list of the most valuable property holdings in which the Church Commissioners have interests can be found on page 48 of the annual report. General information about the total value of Church Commissioner holdings is available in the annual report which is available in the House of Commons Library. Further details of specific valuations are commercially sensitive and the Church Commissioners are unable to release this information.

Helen Goodman: To ask the hon. Member for Banbury, representing the Church Commissioners, what *(a)* buildings, *(b)* land and *(c)* property holdings of estimated monetary value of over £1 million the Church Commissioners own. [25402]

Tony Baldry: General information about the total value of Church Commissioner holdings is available in the annual report and can be found in the House of Commons Library. More detailed information is commercially sensitive and the Church Commissioners are unable to release this information.

Diocesan Advisory Committee

Helen Goodman: To ask the hon. Member for Banbury, representing the Church Commissioners, whether the Church Commissioners had completed a consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Committee under section 3 of the Episcopal Endowment and Stipends Measure 1943 before initiating preparations for the sale of the Zurbarans paintings at Auckland Castle. [25400]

Tony Baldry: The Church Commissioners, understanding of section 3 of Episcopal Endowment and Stipends Measure 1943 is that the Church Commissioners must consult the Diocesan Advisory Committee before demolishing, converting or selling a see house, this does not apply to contents or chattels. The paintings although significant works of art are not part of the fabric of the building and therefore not covered by the 1943 Episcopal Endowment and Stipends Measure which was introduced primarily to enable the Commissioners to take over episcopal endowments in return for paying bishops a fair stipend and providing them with suitable housing.

Lambeth Palace: Finance

Helen Goodman: To ask the hon. Member for Banbury, representing the Church Commissioners, how much income was generated from *(a)* visitors, *(b)* room hire and *(c)* other sources at Lambeth Palace in the latest period for which figures are available. [25192]

Tony Baldry: The annual income from visitors to Lambeth Palace in 2009 was £38,696 with overheads of £18,565. This figure is inclusive of room hire, catering, tours and the sale of any souvenir items.

Written Questions: Government Responses

Helen Goodman: To ask the hon. Member for Banbury, representing the Church Commissioners, when he plans to answer questions *(a)* 25191, *(b)* 25192, *(c)* 25197, *(d)* 25400, *(e)* 25402 and *(f)* 25428, on the Church Estate, tabled on 16 November 2010. [29710]

Tony Baldry: The Church Commissioners have today answered the hon. Member for Bishop Aukland.

TREASURY

Aggregates Levy: Northern Ireland

Ms Ritchie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress his Department has made on negotiations with the European Commission for the reinstatement of the aggregates credit relief scheme; and if he will make a statement. [29709]

Justine Greening: The Government support the re-introduction of the scheme at the earliest opportunity. Following the European General Court ruling annulling state aid approval for the scheme, the Commission will need to take a new decision on whether it is an approvable state aid. My officials are working closely with the authorities in Northern Ireland and representatives of the quarrying industry to collate supporting evidence to submit to the Commission.

Banks: Crown Dependencies

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in his Department have had with each Crown dependency to discuss banking regulation and tax avoidance since 6 May 2010. [29507]

Mr Hoban: Ministers and officials from the Treasury and other Government Departments are in regular dialogue with representatives from UK Crown dependencies on a variety of different subjects. It is important that Crown dependencies are compliant with international standards for financial regulation, including on matters relating to banking regulation and tax.

Banks: Loans

Julian Sturdy: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his Department plans to introduce lending targets for those banks which are part-owned by the Government. [27102]

Mr Hoban: The lending commitments agreed between Government and Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) and Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) are in place until March 2011.

The Government recognise that access to finance is essential if businesses are to invest, grow and make their important contribution to supporting the economic recovery.

In response to the Green Paper, 'Financing a Private Sector Recovery', published earlier this year, Government have set out a comprehensive package of Government and industry-led measures to support small businesses access finance. These measures include:

additional support for the Enterprise Finance Guarantee (EFG) over the next four years to enable over £2 billion of lending to viable small businesses that lack collateral or track record; and

increased equity finance, through £200 million of additional funding for the 'Enterprise Capital Funds programme', both of which could unlock further debt finance for small and medium-sized businesses

More information about these measures and the Green Paper is available at:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/businessfinance

In addition, the British Bankers' Association Taskforce has announced industry-led measure including improving customer relationships through a new Lending Code and the establishment of new £1.5 billion Business Growth Fund, which will provide capital to growing businesses.

Further information about the BBA Taskforce and its commitments are available at:

http://www.bba.org.uk/media/article/business-finance-taskforce

Departmental Complaints

Mr Knight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints *(a)* his Department and *(b)* National Savings has received in the last 12 months for which figures are available; what recent estimate he has made of the average time taken to resolve such a complaint; how much from the public purse was paid out in compensation as a result of such complaints being upheld in that period; and if he will make a statement. [2[illegible]4]

Justine Greening: The Treasury has received no formal complaints on the way officials deal with members of the public in the last 12 months.

For the period 1 November 2009 to 31 October 2010, National Savings & Investments (NS&I) received a total of 7,735 complaints. This figure includes all complaints received, whether justified or not.

NS&I estimates an average time of 36 days is taken to resolve such complaints. NS&I subscribes to the Financial Ombudsman Scheme which allows 40 working days to resolve and respond to complaints.

The amount paid out in compensation from the public purse for the period 1 November 2009 to 31 October 2010 was £38,975.50.

Departmental Correspondence

Mr Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department spent on printing and postage for correspondence in each of the last three financial years. [26118]

Justine Greening: The information requested cannot be provided as the Department's accounting system does not identify printing and postage costs by purpose.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Mr Jenkin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible spent on press cuttings services in each of the last 12 months. [25481]

Justine Greening: Treasury spending on press cuttings over the last 12 months is shown in the following table.

Month (invoice date for services provided in the preceding month)	*Amount (£000)*
December 2009	24
January 2010	23
February 2010	22
March 2010	25
April 2010	34
May 2010	11
June 2010	24
July 2010	16
August 2010	17
September 2010	12
October 2010	16
November 2010	18

The Treasury's non-departmental public body, the Royal Mint Advisory Committee, did not incur any spending on press cutting services.

Departmental Secondment

Steve Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people employed in the financial services industry were seconded to his Department in each month in the last two years. [28219]

Justine Greening: The number of secondees to the Treasury from the financial industry can be found in the following tables:

2009

	Number
January	0
February	3
March	9
April	12
May	4
June	3
July	3
August	1
September	0
October	0
November	1
December	1

2010

	Number
January	0
February	1
March	1
April	1
May	0
June	0
July	4
August	1
September	2
October	1
November	2

Economic Situation: Snow and Ice

Karl Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effect on the economy of recent adverse weather conditions. [29435]

Justine Greening *[holding answer 8 December 2010]*: It is likely that any negative impact on the economy as a whole resulting from the recent adverse weather will be largely short-term, and should be negligible over time. Some consumption will likely be shifted from one type of good to another, or from one time period to another. The Government continue to monitor all relevant factors from a range of sources to inform their assessment of the UK economy.

EU Budget

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what value for money assessment he has undertaken of the UK's contribution to EU spending in each of the last three years. [28676]

Justine Greening: The Government are concerned about the UK's growing contributions to the EU budget and are working hard to reduce them through negotiation of the 2011 EU budget and future budgets. In particular, at the October European Council, the UK won backing from 12 other member states—including Germany and France—to prevent the 6% increase in the 2011 EU budget that was being proposed by the European Parliament.

In addition, the Government will continue to work hard to ensure EU spending is directed towards areas of the budget with strong controls and best-value for money, especially to boost economic growth and competitiveness, and we are co-ordinating with other member states to reduce the costs across all areas of the budget.

Sound financial management is key to achieving value for money, and the Government are disappointed that the European Court of Auditors has been unable to grant a positive Statement of Assurance on the financial management of EU funds for the 16th year in succession. The Government will continue to champion reform through engagement with European institutions and other member states.

EU Grants and Loans

Mr Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which projects undertaken in the UK with support from EU funds *(a)* wholly and *(b)* in part are required to be identified by a flag or logo. [29777]

Justine Greening: Most EU-funded programmes require the recipient to display the emblem of the EU on information and publicity measures relating to the project and, in the case of physical projects, by means of a commemorative plaque.

Financial Inclusion Fund

Mr Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Financial Inclusion Fund in reducing financial exclusion since the Fund was established; and if he will make a statement. [20339]

Mr Hoban *[holding answer 1 November 2010]*: The effectiveness of the Financial Inclusion Fund projects are subject to continuous assessment. All projects regularly submit management information to their respective delivery departments and to the Treasury. The Financial Inclusion Taskforce, an independent advisory group, also oversees the effectiveness of the projects.

Office for Budget Responsibility

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 8 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 97W, on the Office for Budget Responsibility, whether the examination of sustainability of public finances will include an assessment of the potential effects on *(a)* the environment and *(b)* sustainable development in each sector of the economy. [29079]

Justine Greening: The Office for Budget Responsibility has been designed to focus the sustainability of the public finances. The Government do not expect the OBR to explicitly consider issues relating to the environment or the sustainable development of each sector of the economy. The Budget Responsibility and National Audit Bill is available at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/leg_budgetresponsibility_bill.htm

Personal Savings: Children in Care

Mr Hanson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether he plans to bring forward proposals to provide a financial contribution for looked after children as part of the proposed junior individual savings account; [29119]

(2) what representations he has received on looked after children since 23 November 2010. [29064]

Mr Hoban *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: The Government announced on 26 October 2010 that they would create a new tax-free children's savings account. The new accounts, potentially referred to as Junior ISAs, will offer parents a simple and tax-free way to save for their child's future, while also saving over £500 million that would have been spent each year on Child Trust Funds.

The Government are working closely with stakeholders to finalise the design of the accounts, and intends for them to be available by autumn 2011.

This work includes exploring how to ensure that Junior ISAs are accessible to looked after children, who are among the most disadvantaged groups of young people in society.

In particular, as I said at the Report stage of the Savings Accounts and Health in Pregnancy Grant Bill, on 22 November 2010, I am carefully considering proposals that have been made for the Government to open and contribute to Junior ISA accounts for looked after children.

The Government have received no further representations on this matter since 23 November 2010.

Revenue and Customs: Standards

Jonathan Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the efficiency of HM Revenue and Customs staff in responding to written correspondence from taxpayers; and if he will make a statement. [16084]

Mr Gauke: HMRC receives on average between 200,000 to 250,000 items of correspondence per week and has currently under 620,000 items of correspondence on hand, equating to 14 working days worth of receipts. Less than 3% of correspondence is currently over 40 days old.

National Audit Office recently assessed its efficiency in dealing with correspondence from agents. Its findings were published in the document "Engaging with Tax Agents", published on 13 October 2010.

Tax Allowances

Mr Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 25 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 144W, on BP: tax allowances, for what reasons tax relief granted by the Exchequer for a specific purpose is considered to be a matter confidential to a particular business. [29302]

Mr Gauke: Tax reliefs and allowances have a statutory basis. The scope of, and conditions for, reliefs and allowances are therefore in the public domain. However, specific claims to tax reliefs and allowances by a particular business and the extent to which those claims are admitted, are subject to HMRC's strict statutory duty of confidentiality.

Taxation: Construction

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 284W, on taxation: construction, what information HM Revenue and Customs holds on the number of businesses which have had their CIS6 Gross Status Certificate withdrawn in each of the last three calendar years. [27754]

Mr Gauke *[holding answer 1 December 2010]*: The number of businesses which have had their gross payment status withdrawn in each of the last three calendar years is:

	Number
2008 (January to December)	11,348
2009 (January to December)	8,494
2010 (January to 21 November)	8,052

VAT: Charities

Bob Russell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate he has made of the amount of additional revenue which will be collected from charities as a result of the change in the rate of value added tax in 2011-12; [29296]

(2) what estimate he has made of the amount of revenue to accrue from value added tax on charities in 2010-11. [29299]

Mr Gauke *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: Charities benefit from a range of tax reliefs which for 2009-10 the Government estimate are worth approximately £3 billion per annum. These include reliefs from VAT, for example: VAT zero rating on the sale of donated goods, medical and scientific equipment and, for qualifying charities, goods for use by disabled people. All zero rates are derogations from the normal EU VAT rules, and represent benefits not enjoyed by charities elsewhere in Europe.

Charities carrying out non-taxable activities may incur irrecoverable VAT on their purchases but information is not available to accurately assess the amount or the effect of the forthcoming increase in the standard rate of VAT.

Welfare Tax Credits

Mr Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects the claim for tax credits from Craig Bridges, a constituent of the hon. Member for Torbay, to be activated and for payment to begin. [29864]

Mr Gauke: I am not able to publish details of an individual's dealings with HMRC.

Working Tax Credit

Naomi Long: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will bring forward proposals to assess an entitlement to the additional element of working tax credit on account of disability by means other than receipt of disability living allowance. [28628]

Mr Gauke: To receive the disability element of the working tax credit, a claimant must usually work at least 16 hours a week and have a mental or physical disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job and must currently get, or have recently been getting, a qualifying sickness or disability benefit. Disability living allowance is one of the benefits that a claimant could be in receipt of in order to pass the "qualifying benefit" test, but it is not the only one.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office

Mr Umunna: To ask the Solicitor-General whether he undertook an impact assessment of the closure of the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office. [24265]

The Solicitor-General: An equality impact assessment was carried out by the Revenue and Customs Prosecution Office (RCPO) Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) transition merger board. A copy of this assessment will be placed in the Library.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Colombia: Politics and Government

Jim McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Government of Colombia requesting that church leaders be treated as a particularly vulnerable group. [29816]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The Colombian authorities generally consider whether individuals are vulnerable on a case-by-case basis rather than considering specific groups as vulnerable.

The UK Government share the concern that some religious leaders in Colombia, together with trade unionists, journalists and other human rights defenders are vulnerable. We have made representations to the Colombian Government in the past on such cases, and we will continue to do so.

On 11 November this year our officials in London met Christian Solidarity Worldwide and the wife of disappeared Pastor William Reyes to discuss the situation of church leaders and Christians in Colombia. Officials at our embassy in Bogota also met members of the Kogui Christian Community earlier this year, to show visible support for their right to religious freedom.

Departmental Pay

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many people have received a salary of more than £140,000 per annum from his Department in each of the last five years. [28555]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office paid a basic salary of more than £140,000 to the following numbers of staff in each year since 2005-06:

	Number
2005-06	5
2006-07	7
2007-08	10
2008-09	9
2009-10	8

European Union: Treaties

Mr Cash: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals for Treaty amendment consequent on the meeting of the European Council on 28 and 29 October 2010 have been *(a)* made to and *(b)* discussed in (i) COREPER (ii) the Council of Ministers and (iii) the European Council; what the content is of such proposals; on what dates further discussion of such proposals is planned in each such body; what timetable has been set for (A) ratification and (B) implementation of Treaty amendments; if he will deposit the text of such proposals in the House for scrutiny by the European Scrutiny Committee under the powers of Standing Order No. 143; and if he will make a statement. [29390]

Mr Lidington *[holding answer 8 December 2010]:* Following the October European Council and the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) meeting on 28 November, the issue of treaty amendment in relation to eurozone stability will be discussed at the December European Council. This is on the basis of a report from the President of the European Council. We expect proposals, once circulated, to be discussed in the usual way in COREPER, the Council and finally at the December European Council. My right hon. Friends the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer have set out the UK's position before Parliament. They have made clear that the UK will not be part of any new permanent stability mechanism for the eurozone.

Iran: Nuclear Weapons

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what recent reports he has received from Arab states on the acquisition of atomic weapons by Iran; and if he will make a statement; [R] [29801]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in Arab states on the acquisition of atomic weapons by Iran; and if he will make a statement. [R] [29802]

Alistair Burt: We have a regular and detailed dialogue with Arab states about a range of regional challenges, including the need for Iran to bring its nuclear programme in line with its international obligations.

Most recently a UK delegation led by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence was able to discuss these concerns and challenges with a number of regional partners at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Manama Dialogue in Bahrain 3-7 December.

Regional countries tell us that they are deeply concerned by Iran's nuclear ambitions and share the UK's objective of finding a diplomatic solution to this issue.

Timber

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the compliance of *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* its non-departmental public bodies with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber. [27843]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) timber procurement follows the specifications defined in the UK Government's Timber Procurement Policy which requires that all timber and wood products must be procured from independently verifiable legal and sustainable sources or Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade-licensed timber or equivalent sources. The Government's definition of sustainability is based on internationally agreed criteria for sustainable forest management, which is referred to by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation have not set criteria for sourcing sustainable timber as such, but refer to the same internationally agreed criteria.

The procurement of timber and wood products for the FCO executive agency Wilton Park is undertaken on their behalf by the Corporate Procurement Group within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and is therefore compliant with the specifications mentioned above.

The Head of Global Estates and the Head of Procurement have confirmed that the British Council follows the specifications set out in the UK Government's Timber Procurement Policy for timber procurement in the UK and overseas.

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy does not source timber. Similarly the Great Britain China Centre have not had to source timber and have confirmed that they would comply with the UN Food and Agriculture criteria for sourcing sustainable timber.

There has been no record of procurement of timber in this financial year for the other non-departmental public bodies: BBC World Service, Diplomatic Service Appeals Board, Foreign Compensation Commission, Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission and the UK India Round Table.

Zimbabwe: Human Rights

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps at the United Nations he *(a)* has taken since his appointment and *(b)* plans to take in the next six months in response to allegations of (i) human rights abuses and (ii) attacks on farms and agricultural workers in Zimbabwe; and if he will make a statement. [29354]

Mr Lidington: The UK was proactive in raising Zimbabwe at the UN at the height of the violence in 2008. However, given the improvements in the situation on the ground the UN has not discussed Zimbabwe since the formation of the Inclusive Government in February 2009. We will continue to consider the role of the UN as we monitor the situation in Zimbabwe.

Since the formation of the Inclusive Government there has been a marked fall in the levels of violence from a peak of over 300 deaths in 2008 to single figures in 2010. Figures for reported deaths and injuries have remained fairly stable over the past year. However, the fear of violence and intimidation, particularly in relation to forthcoming elections, remains high.

The farm invasions by ZANU (PF) supporters contravene the Southern African Development Community ruling of November 2008 as well as the terms of the Global Political Agreement. Farm workers suffer equally with farm owners, often losing their accommodation as well as their livelihood.

Our embassy in Harare monitors the situation closely and continues to make clear our concerns to the Government of Zimbabwe. The consul met with British farmers in July to further understand their concerns and see what assistance we might be able to offer. Violent invasions demonstrate a lack of respect for the rule of law. We continue to urge the police and judicial authorities in Zimbabwe to take action against them.

We, with our partners, including the UN, will continue to monitor the human rights situation closely and support efforts to prevent abuses and institute international human rights standards.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received of political violence in Zimbabwe; what recent discussions he has had with his Zimbabwean counterpart on this issue; what the outcome of such discussions was; and if he will make a statement. [29355]

Mr Lidington: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had any meetings with the Zimbabwean Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The general level of violence and abuse has reduced greatly since its peak in 2008. We continue to be concerned about politically inspired human rights abuses perpetrated against political and civil society activists and farm workers—intimidation, harassment and arbitrary arrests. We are also concerned about the repressive legislation which adversely affects the innocent people of Zimbabwe. Figures for reported deaths and injuries have remained fairly stable over the past year. However, the fear of violence and intimidation, particularly in relation to forthcoming elections, remains high.

We continue to call, both bilaterally and with EU member states, for an end to all such abuses and the restoration of internationally accepted human rights standards in Zimbabwe.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on allegations of human rights abuses in Zimbabwe; and if he will make a statement. [29356]

Mr Lidington: Contact with a wide range of civil society actors, backed by our own observations, suggests that since the formation of the Inclusive Government there has been a marked fall in the levels of violence. This has reduced from a peak of over 300 deaths in 2008 to single figures in 2010. Figures for reported deaths and injuries have remained fairly stable over the past year. However, the fear of violence and intimidation, particularly in relation to forthcoming elections, remains high.

We, with our partners, will continue to monitor the human rights situation closely. We will also continue to support efforts to prevent abuses and institute international human rights standards.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions *(a)* HM ambassador to Zimbabwe, *(b)* Ministers in his Department and *(c)* officials in his Department have had with the President of Zimbabwe on human rights in Zimbabwe; and if he will make a statement. [29425]

Mr Lidington: There have been no recent meetings between Ministers or officials and President Mugabe. The only contact our ambassador has had with President Mugabe was when he presented his credentials on 23 July 2009.

We remain concerned that the Zimbabwean Parliament have not yet repealed repressive legislation and there has been little progress on judicial reform or establishing the rule of law.

Despite the substantial reduction in violence since the formation of the Inclusive Government, we continue to be concerned about politically-inspired human rights abuses—intimidation, harassment and arbitrary arrests—perpetrated against journalists, as well as political and civil society activists.

We continue to monitor the situation on the ground and urge all sides of government to observe the spirit as well as the letter of the Global Political Agreement fully. We are also calling, both bilaterally and with EU member states, for an end to all such abuses and the restoration of internationally accepted human rights standards in Zimbabwe.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Poultry

Mr Andrew Turner: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what arrangements the House of Commons catering service plans to put in place to ensure that the slaughter method of poultry served in its catering outlets is known; when such arrangements will become operational; and from what date such arrangements will be in place. [28800]

John Thurso: Incumbent suppliers and suppliers bidding for the award of the contract for the future supply of fresh meats and poultry to the House of Commons catering service have provided written guarantees that they will ensure that no halal slaughtered poultry is supplied unless specifically requested or agreed to by the House of Commons catering service.

It has also been added as a condition of contract with both existing and soon-to-be-appointed suppliers that should the House of Commons catering service be forced to accept halal slaughtered poultry due to market availability, this will firstly be communicated verbally and then clearly indicated by the supplier on the delivery note through the introduction of unique halal product codes and descriptions which will clearly indicate halal slaughter.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Homelessness: Voting Rights

John Mann: To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what steps the Electoral Commission is taking on the registration of homeless people to vote. [29494]

Mr Streeter: The Electoral Commission informs me that Electoral Registration Officers are responsible for compiling and maintaining the electoral register. Electoral law enables homeless people to register by way of a declaration of local connection. The Electoral Commission produces guidance for Electoral Registration Officers, which sets out some ways to identify homeless people who may be entitled to register in this way, including through local homeless charities and organisations, day centres and hostels.

In addition, as part of its campaign ahead of the 2010 UK Parliamentary General Election, the Commission developed a poster to encourage voter registration among homeless people. The Commission sent letters to 1,603 hostels and 835 charities and homeless organisations that work with homeless people to encourage them to order this poster, along with other Commission resources that would be useful in engaging with this group. The letter also gave instructions for running a workshop on registration and voting.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Experiments: Botulinum Toxin

Mr Mike Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will review the continued use of mice for the potency testing of botulism under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 in the light of the availability of a validated alternative which does not involve the use of animals; and if she will make a statement. [24624]

Lynne Featherstone: We continue to authorise the use animals for the potency testing of botulinum toxin products as international and United Kingdom regulations relating to the safety and efficacy of medicines require that they are tested for potency. This form of testing is kept under regular review and only licensed where there is no alternative.

The Home Office currently license the use of animals for the testing of material produced in the United Kingdom for medicinal use because, at present, non-animal alternatives have yet to be validated to the standard required for use by the relevant laboratories. There is a wide variation in batch-to-batch potency which requires that each batch should be checked and each different medicine requires a unique development, validation and regulatory acceptance for any proposed alternative test. There is no agreed measurable unit of potency for botulinum toxin, it can only be assessed as a function of its biological effect on a living organism.

We believe that our licensing is consistent with the requirement of section 5(5)(a) of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 that licence authorities may only be granted where we are satisfied that the purpose of the programme to be specified in the licence cannot be achieved satisfactorily by any other reasonably practicable method not entailing the use of animals.

The Home Office and all others, including the laboratories and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, concerned with conducting and regulating such testing are committed to using alternatives to animals as soon as it becomes practicable to do so.

Asylum: Deportation

Mark Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of progress of the UK Border Agency in implementing the recommendations on the management of removals made by Baroness O'Loan in March 2010. [29242]

Damian Green: Following publication of Baroness O'Loan's report into detention and escorting of immigration detainees in March 2010, the UK Border Agency committed to meet all 21 recommendations for which it has responsibility within 12 months.

Work on meeting the recommendations has been progressing well and the agency remains on track to deliver all the recommendations on time. Details of how they have been achieved will be shared with Baroness O'Loan once the work has been completed.

Mark Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations she has received on the treatment of people in custody by her Department's contractor for escort services to failed asylum seekers; and if she will make a statement. [29243]

Damian Green: On 12 November my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary received a letter signed by a number of organisations and individuals asking for an inquiry into the treatment of immigration detainees by private sector detention and escorting staff, the use of restraint, and complaints handling by the UK Border Agency

I replied on behalf of the Home Secretary on 24 November explaining that Baroness Nuala O'Loan had considered these issues in her report of March 2010 into the work of detention and escorting staff. Her thorough and detailed investigation found no evidence to substantiate an allegation that detainees were subjected to systematic abuse. However, she made 21 recommendations for the UK Border Agency about the way it manages complaints, detention custody officers' training and oversight of their work. The UK Border Agency accepted all the recommendations and committed to implement them all within 12 months. It remains on track to meet this commitment.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her policy is on no-notice removals for failed asylum-seeking families; and if she will make a statement. [29267]

Damian Green: Since the ruling in the High Court on 16 July, the UK Border Agency's policy is not to carry out 'no notice' removals. The agency's policy is to give at least 72 hours notice of removal. However, in exceptional circumstances where the removal could not be managed in any other way, a policy of giving a reduced period of notice has been used.

Departmental Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate she has made of the number of questions to her Department tabled in the *(a)* House of Commons and *(b)* House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available. [28492]

James Brokenshire: It is not possible to identify, using the data held in the Home Office system for managing written parliamentary questions, how many questions remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of waiting for guidance of the type referred to in the question.

In the case of questions that are deemed to be "round robin", the Guide to Parliamentary Work, published by the Leader of the House of Commons, and available at:

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/government-business/parliamentary-business.aspx

states that Departments should not delay preparing an answer until "round robin" advice is provided, and should not miss the target deadlines for this reason. The

Home Office endeavours to answer all questions—including those deemed "round robin"—within the appointed timescales.

Detention Centres: Females

Richard Fuller: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will take steps to end the detention of women in immigration removal centres. [29784]

Damian Green: Any foreign national, including women, may be detained under powers set out in the Immigration Act 1971 in the following circumstances: initially, whilst identity and basis of claim are established; where there are reasonable grounds for believing that the person concerned will not comply with the conditions of temporary admission or release; as part of a fast-track asylum process; or to effect removal from the UK. We have no plans to change this position.

Detention Centres: Medicine

Richard Fuller: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many months of medicine her Department provides to those diagnosed with HIV or AIDS at each immigration detention centre upon removal from the UK. [29785]

Damian Green: Responsibility for immigration removal centres falls to the UK Border Agency.

Every detainee is seen by a nurse within two hours of arrival and is given an appointment to see a GP within 24 hours, unless an earlier appointment is required.

The continuity of treatment for those detainees with HIV/AIDS remains, however, with the national health service and it is therefore a matter for the individual's consultant to determine the volume of medication provided upon removal. Each detainee is considered on a case by case basis.

Drugs: Misuse

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons she plans to propose the removal of the statutory requirement for scientists to be on the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs; and if she will make a statement. [29702]

James Brokenshire: This Government are committed to an evidence-based approach in the formulation of its drug policies. High quality scientific advice in this complex field is of the utmost importance. This is why we value the work and independent advice of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs.

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill proposes to remove the requirement to appoint at least one person with experience in each of six specific areas to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs. This is to allow the council greater flexibility in drawing on the expertise it requires, including scientific expertise, from its membership. This will enable it to better adapt to the fast moving challenges in the drugs landscape and ensure that it can draw on the most appropriate scientific expertise at any one time.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave during Home Office oral questions on 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 20.

Entry Clearances: Entertainers

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the thousand work visas to be issued under tier 1 of the revised immigration rules she expects to be issued to musicians, artists and performers. [29865]

Damian Green: We will announce details of how the new tier 1 category for exceptionally talented individuals will operate in due course.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance she plans to issue to those assessing tier 1 work visa applications on determining whether an applicant has exceptional talent and has achieved or is likely to achieve international renown. [29866]

Damian Green: We will announce further details of how the new tier 1 category for exceptionally talented individuals will operate in due course.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the effects of restrictions on tier 1 immigration on musicians and other performers seeking to perform in the UK. [29867]

Damian Green: Musicians and other performers seeking to perform in one or more engagements in the UK currently apply through tier 5 or tier 2 of the points-based system and should continue to do so. The new tier 1 category is for exceptionally talented individuals who are intending to base themselves in the UK.

Immigration

Dr Huppert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she has made an assessment of the merits of increasing the number of points available in the points-based immigration system for holders of a PhD relative to holders of an MBA. [28346]

Damian Green *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary announced on 23 November 2010 the changes we will be making to economic migration routes from 1 April 2011. If demand exceeds the number of Certificates of Sponsorship available for monthly allocation within the limit for Tier 2 visas, we shall rank applications according to criteria which will give due weight and a degree of priority to research vacancies requiring a PhD.

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions officials of her Department have had with officials of the Department for International Development on proposed changes to immigration and citizenship arrangements. [28902]

Damian Green *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: In common with all relevant Departments, the Department for International Development is fully involved in the process of designing changes to the immigration system.

Immigration Controls

Mr Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the potential effects of the annual limit on non-EU immigration on the care sector. [29063]

Damian Green *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: The Government carried out a full public consultation over the summer to ensure we took a wide range of views and evidence into account. We will publish an impact assessment on the changes we are making to economic migration routes.

Offensive Weapons: Advertising

Gavin Shuker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will bring forward legislative proposals to regulate the advertisement of knives and air weapons in free newspapers. [29343]

James Brokenshire: There are no current plans to legislate in this way.

It is an offence to sell an air weapon or a knife to a person under 18. Under section 32 of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006, a person who sells air weapons by way of trade or business must ensure that the final transfer of any weapon sold to a member of the public is done on a face-to-face basis.

SCOTLAND

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what his Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30025]

David Mundell: The Scotland Office does not have a separate conference budget

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

Equal Pay

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what research she has commissioned on the gender pay gap since May 2010; and what steps she plans to take to close the gap. [29039]

Lynne Featherstone: The Government have not commissioned any new research on the gender pay gap since May 2010.

The Government are committed to tackling the gender pay gap and are taking a range of measures to improve women's position in the labour market including making pay secrecy clauses unenforceable, extending positive action and the right to request flexible working, consulting on a new system of parental leave, and promoting gender equality on company boards including asking Lord Davies to fully investigate the issue.

On 2 December, the Government also announced they were working with partners to develop a voluntary approach on gender pay reporting in the private and voluntary sector.

PRIME MINISTER

Chanukah

Mr Amess: To ask the Prime Minister if he will seek to publish in the *Official Report* the text of his Chanukah message to the Jewish community; and if he will make a statement. [29797]

The Prime Minister: I am happy to publish the text of my Chanukah message in the *Official Report*. It reads as follows:

> "I want to pass on my very best wishes to the Jewish community here and around the world for a happy and peaceful Chanukah. The story of Chanukah continues to be an inspiring message of the power of hope to sustain people through the toughest of times, and the strength that we can find when we come together and focus on building a brighter future. I wish you and your families a chanukah sameach."

The message can also be found on the No. 10 website at:

http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/latest-news/2010/12/pms-message-for-chanukah-57735

Drugs

John Mann: To ask the Prime Minister on which dates he has attended ministerial meetings on tackling drugs since 6 May 2010. [29516]

The Prime Minister: I have regular meetings with the Home Secretary, Ministers, Cabinet and Cabinet Committees.

Football: World Cup

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Prime Minister (1) how many people travelled with him to Zurich in connection with the FIFA World cup vote on 2 December 2010; and what the cost to the public purse was of that travel; [29238]

(2) what the cost to the public purse was of his visit to Zurich in connection with the FIFA World cup vote on 2 December 2010. [29261]

The Prime Minister: I travelled to Zurich on 30 November 2010 and again on 1 December to support the England 2018 team who worked around the clock to try to secure an England World Cup. As set out in the Ministerial Code, details of my overseas travel will be published at least quarterly.

Nuclear Power

Paul Flynn: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the oral evidence taken by the Liaison Committee on 18 November 2010, HC 608-i, Q 92, on what dates and at what locations he met representatives of EDF; what matters were discussed at each such meeting; which officials took part in each such meeting; and what the cost was to the public purse of each such meeting. [27733]

The Prime Minister: I met representatives of EDF on 12 October 2010. The meeting was held at No. 10.

Schools Sport Partnerships Scheme

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Prime Minister how many representations he has received from *(a)* Olympic medal winners and *(b)* athletes on his decision to reduce levels of funding for the Schools Sport Partnerships scheme; and who in his Department will be responsible for responding to such representations. [28760]

The Prime Minister: My office and the Department for Education have received a number of representations. I refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Bradford South (Mr Sutcliffe) on 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 817, on the subject.

Special Representative for International Trade and Investment

Paul Flynn: To ask the Prime Minister what recent assessment he has made of the work of the UK's Special Representative for International Trade and Investment. [28393]

The Prime Minister: The UK's Special Representative for International Trade and Investment is making a hugely important contribution to the UK's relationship with trading partners around the world.

Written Questions

Ian Austin: To ask the Prime Minister whether he has set a target for answering written questions tabled for answer on a named day; and if he will make a statement. [29705]

The Prime Minister: My office aims to answer all named day written parliamentary questions on the day named.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Bus Services: Concessions

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent representations he has received from hon. Members on funding of the national concessionary bus fare scheme; and if he will make a statement. [28747]

Robert Neill: I have received a number of representations on the funding of the concessionary fares scheme from hon. Members. We will announce our proposals for the local government finance settlement for 2011-12 in the usual manner in due course.

EU Grants and Loans: North East

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether provisions exist to ensure that match-funding is in place for the North East England 2007-13 European Regional Development Framework Competitiveness Programme after March 2011. [29754]

Robert Neill: We expect that match funding will be available from a range of other public sector sources such as the regional growth fund, and the private sector.

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the monetary value is of North East England 2007-13 European Regional Development Framework Competitiveness Programme funding that remains uncommitted. [29755]

Robert Neill: The allocation for the North East England 2007-13 European Regional Development Fund Competitiveness Programme is €375.7 million. The total amount that has been committed is €235.4 million. Therefore €140.3 million remains uncommitted.

Housing Benefit

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) whether his Department will use agreed market rents when determining what 80 per cent. of market rent is in a given area; and what sources his Department will use to determine those levels; [29230]

(2) whether there will be *(a)* national, *(b)* regional and *(c)* local formulas for determining the rate at which affordable rents will be set. [29234]

Grant Shapps: I have today issued a statement in the House of Commons setting out details on the calculation of affordable rents.

Housing: South Lanarkshire

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) if he will estimate the number of vacant private rented homes with *(a)* one bedroom and *(b)* two bedrooms in (i) South Lanarkshire and (ii) Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency where the rental is in the bottom 30% of local market values; [29368]

(2) if he will estimate the number of vacant local authority tenanted homes with *(a)* one bedroom and *(b)* two bedrooms in (i) South Lanarkshire and (ii) Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency; [29374]

(3) what estimate he has made of the number of vacant housing association tenanted homes with *(a)* one bedroom and *(b)* two bedrooms in (i) South Lanarkshire and (ii) Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency; [29375]

(4) if he will estimate the number of tenants for each tenure type who are under-occupying their property in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency; and how many of these are in receipt of (i) housing benefit and (ii) local housing allowance; [29376]

(5) if he will estimate the number of multi-occupancy lets there are in each tenure type in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency. [29377]

Andrew Stunell: Data on number of bedrooms, under-occupancy and multi-occupancy at the constituency level are not available.

Local Government Finance

Mr Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for what reasons his Department decided that the majority of reductions in central Government contributions to local government should be made in the first two years of the spending review period. [28590]

Robert Neill *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: The phasing of the savings to local government were laid out in the spending review, setting out the coalition Government's plans to secure economic stability and put Britain's public services on a sustainable long-term footing.

Reducing the overall deficit is a necessary precondition for sustained economic growth. Failure to take action now would put the recovery at risk and place an unfair burden on future generations.

Each part of the public sector needs to make its contribution to tackling the inherited fiscal deficit. Not reducing local government spending in such a way would require greater reductions to other areas of the public sector, adversely affecting other public services.

Indeed, it should be noted that the last Government's plans for £52 billion of reductions to spending were front-loaded, with £14 billion of spending reductions planned in 2011-12.

A full statement on the Local Government Finance Settlement will be made to the House shortly. However, I refer my hon. Friend to the Secretary of State's letter of 20 October 2010, a copy of which is in the Library of the House. It outlines new freedoms and flexibilities for local government, the scope for local innovation and transformational savings, the additional funding to support a council tax freeze next year, and the funding being provided to support social care and Supporting People.

Local Government: Billing

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what guidance his Department has issued to local authorities on prompt payment of suppliers; and what assessment he has made of levels of compliance with this guidance. [29224]

Robert Neill: Prompt payment is an important issue, particularly to small and medium enterprises, where cash flow is critical for business survival. My own Department is a signatory to the Prompt Payment Code for this reason.

I understand that, during 2009, the previous Government considered taking measures to encourage local authorities to sign up to the Prompt Payment Code. This did not happen as it was deemed an unfunded additional financial burden. Instead the then Secretary of State wrote to Margaret Eaton, Chairman of the Local Government Association to encourage local authorities to improve their already strong track record on payments to suppliers.

Regional Government

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment he has made of the potential effects on households of his proposed reform of regional governance; and if he will make a statement. [29310]

Greg Clark: The Localism Bill will include proposals to abolish regional strategies and regional government. A full impact assessment for the Bill will be published. The abolition of regional government will strengthen local democracy and local accountability.

Working Neighbourhoods Fund: Newcastle upon Tyne

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much funding from the Working Neighbourhood Fund was granted to organisations and projects in Newcastle Upon Tyne Central constituency in 2009-10. [29742]

Robert Neill: The Working Neighbourhoods Fund is allocated to local authorities not constituencies. It is paid as part of the area-based grant to local authorities with high rates of worklessness, giving them the freedom and flexibility to use the funding in creative ways to support local priorities. Central Government do not monitor how a local authority spends their allocation.

Newcastle Upon Tyne was awarded £10.6 million Working Neighbourhoods Fund in 2009-10.

Youth Services: Finance

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will assess the merits of encouraging local authorities to protect the provision of youth centres when considering the implementation of reductions in their budgets; and if he will make a statement. [29331]

Andrew Stunell: The Department for Education has responsibility for the provision of funding for youth centres.

Spending decisions are, and will continue to be, a matter for local authorities. We have a rich diversity of voluntary organisations, charities, faith groups, co-operatives, social enterprises and local housing trusts — all of who already make a huge contribution to local life. The Big Society means using their potential and involving them even more in delivering what people want. We do not expect local authorities to respond by passing on disproportionate cuts to other service providers, especially the voluntary sector.

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what financial support is available to community groups that wish to take over the operation of youth centres that face closure as a result of reductions in local authority budgets; and if he will make a statement. [29332]

Andrew Stunell: My Department plans to bring in a new community right as part of the Localism Bill that will give community groups new opportunities to help them to save local facilities, such as youth centres, that face closure. We plan to announce the detail of this right imminently.

My Department already provides support, in the form of information, advice and expertise, through the Asset Transfer Unit to those who are looking to take on an asset from a local authority. The Unit is managed by the Development Trusts Association and currently funded by DCLG until 1 March 2011.

Across Government, we are looking at ways to enable and encourage greater access to community finance. For example, plans for a new Big Society Bank will help to create an increased flow of finance for those community groups who need it.

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education on the provision of youth centres by local authorities; and if he will make a statement. [29334]

Andrew Stunell: Ministers across both Departments have regular discussions on issues of shared interest. Local people are best placed to make decisions about the provision of youth centres. Through the Localism Bill, we are setting out measures to create a more contestable and diverse market for publicly funded services. Department for Education funding for targeted support for young people will be administered to local areas through the Early Intervention Grant.

HEALTH

Accident and Emergency Departments

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time in accident and emergency departments was in each of the last five years. [29281]

Mr Simon Burns: The following table sets out the mean and median time spent between arrival and departure in accident and emergency (A&E) departments in England in 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10. For 2009-10 the data are provisional. Data are not available for the period before 2007-08.

Minutes

	Mean duration to departure	*Median duration to departure*
2007-08	130	112
2008-09	136	117
2009-10 (Provisional)	135	122

Notes:

1. *Duration to departure* The time (expressed as a whole number of minutes) between the patients arrival and the time the A&E attendance has concluded and the department is no longer responsible for the care of the patient.

2. The data exclude planned follow-up attendances.

3. *Provisional data* (April 2009 to March 2010). The data are provisional and may be incomplete or contain errors for which no adjustments have yet been made. Counts produced from provisional data are likely to be lower than those generated for the same period in the final dataset. It is also probable that clinical data are not complete, which may in particular affect the last two months of any given period. There may also be errors due to coding inconsistencies that have not yet been investigated and corrected.

4. *A&E data quality* Hospital episode statistics (HES) are compiled from data sent by a number of NHS providers across England. The NHS Information Centre for health and social care liaises closely with these organisations to encourage submission of complete and valid data and seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data via HES processes. While this brings about improvement over time, some shortcomings remain. The A&E HES publications addresses some of the key data quality and coverage issues. These are available on HESonline:

www.hesonline.nhs.uk

Source: Accident and Emergency Hospital Episode Statistics (A&E HES); The NHS Information Centre for health and social care.

Blood: Contamination

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to complete his review of the recommendations of the Archer inquiry into the supply of contaminated blood in NHS facilities. [29711]

Anne Milton: I refer the hon. Member to my written ministerial statement given on 14 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 30WS.

Dental Services

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of people able to receive treatment from an NHS dentist. [29751]

Mr Simon Burns: Primary care trusts are currently responsible for commissioning sufficient primary care dentistry to meet local demand. Under the proposals set out in the White Paper "Equity and Excellence Liberating the NHS", the NHS Commissioning Board would, subject to the outcome of consultation and parliamentary approval, take on responsibility for commissioning primary care dentistry and, if locally required, increasing those services to meet demand. We are committed to improving access to national health service dentistry, and will shortly announce our proposals for piloting reforms to the current dental contract.

Dental Services: Crewe

Mr Timpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the percentage of residents of the Crewe and Nantwich constituency that have access to an NHS dentist. [29758]

Mr Simon Burns: Primary care trusts (PCTs) are currently responsible for commissioning sufficient primary care dentistry to meet local demand. Under the proposals set out in the White Paper "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS", the NHS Commissioning Board would, subject to the outcome of consultation and parliamentary approval, take on responsibility for commissioning primary care dentistry and, if locally required, increasing those services to meet demand. Accordingly, the Secretary of State for Health has not made an estimate of the percentage of residents of the Crewe and Nantwich constituency that have access to a national health service dentist.

Under the current dental contractual arrangements, introduced on 1 April 2006, patients do not have to be registered with an NHS dentist to receive NHS care. The closest equivalent measure to 'registration' is the number of patients receiving NHS dental services ("patients seen") over a 24 month period. However, this is not directly comparable to the registration data for earlier years.

Information on the number of patients seen in the previous 24 months as a percentage of the population, in England, is available in "Table D2 of Annex 3 of the NHS Dental Statistics for England 2010/11", first quarterly report. Information is available at quarterly intervals, from 31 March 2006 to 30 September 2010.

and is provided by primary care trust and by strategic health authority but is not available by parliamentary constituency.

This report, published on 24 November 2010, has already been placed in the Library and is also available on the NHS Information Centre for health and social care website at:

www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/dentalstats1011q1

Departmental Billing

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance his Department follows on the prompt payment of suppliers. [29208]

Mr Simon Burns: Budget 2010 announced that all central Government Departments are required to aim to pay 80% of all undisputed invoices within five days.

EU Law

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by his Department; and what estimate he has made of the cost of each such transposition. [27493]

Mr Simon Burns: There is one directive currently pending transition into domestic legislation which is Directive 2010/53/EU which sets minimum standards across the European Union for the quality and safety of organs intended for transplantation. It entered into force in August 2010 and national governments have two years to transpose it into national legislation. The directive requires EU member states to set up a competent authority or authorities responsible for maintaining quality and safety standards for organs intended for transplantation.

Implementation is likely to involve some costs—for example, the establishment of a competent authority; establishment of a new authorisation system (including the compliance costs of those required to register); and introduction of a formal reporting system for serious adverse events and reactions. The estimates of these costs vary considerably depending on the regulatory model used across the whole of the United Kingdom, but may be between £0.5 million and £2 million per annum.

Eyesight: Testing

Mr Timpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of people in Crewe and Nantwich constituency eligible for a free eye test. [29664]

Mr Simon Burns: The Secretary of State for Health has not made an estimate of the number of people in Crewe and Nantwich constituency eligible for a free eye test.

However, free sight tests are available under the national health service to many people, including people aged 60 and over, children under 16, those aged 16 to 18 in full-time education, people on benefits, those people at particular risk of developing eye disease, and people who are registered blind or partially sighted or who have a complex spectacle prescription.

The number of NHS sight tests, by patient eligibility, in England in 2009-10 is available in Table B1 of Annex B of the 'General Ophthalmic Services: Activity Statistics for England and Wales, Year Ending 31 March 2010' report. Information is provided by primary care trust and by strategic health authority but is not available by parliamentary constituency.

This report, published on 13 July 2010, has been placed in the Library and is also available on the NHS Information Centre website at:

www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/gosactivity0910

It should be noted that figures relate to actual numbers of sight tests and not individuals.

Family Nurse Partnership Programme

Mr Timpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the outcomes of the Family Nurse Partnership programme; and what plans he has for the future of the service. [29757]

Anne Milton: We are evaluating the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) programme in England through a formative evaluation of implementation in the first 10 sites, conducted by Birkbeck college, university of London; and a randomised controlled trial (RCT) in 18 sites, led by the South East Wales Trials Unit at the School of Medicine, Cardiff university. The RCT will test the impact of FNP compared with other services on pregnancy and birth outcomes, on child health and development and on parental life course; and it will also assess costs, through an economic evaluation. This is due to report in 2013.

Reports of findings from the first two years of the Birkbeck evaluation were published in 2008 and 2009. This early evidence is promising, suggesting that the programme can be delivered well in England, that take up is also good amongst the most disadvantaged, teenage parents, including fathers, who we know often distrust services, with 87% of mothers who are offered FNP enrolling on it. In addition, mothers are reducing smoking in pregnancy, a high proportion are initiating breastfeeding, mothers are coping better with pregnancy, labour and parenthood and are more confident as parents. A report of the toddlerhood phase of FNP will be published shortly, and a full report of all three years will be published by spring 2011.

In addition, over 30 years of United States research suggests positive outcomes in the short, medium and long-term for both mothers and children, together with substantial cost savings.

On the basis of this learning the Government have committed to double the number of families receiving the Family Nurse Partnership programme by 2015. Over 6,000 families have benefitted from FNP to date.

Food Standards Agency

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of the incorporation into his Department of the nutrition functions of the Food Standards Agency. [29793]

Anne Milton: The estimated cost of incorporating the nutrition functions of the Food Standards Agency into the Department of Health is approximately £171,000.

Hospitals: Children

Ben Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to support the development and schooling of children who are patients in paediatric wards; and if he will make a statement. [29592]

Anne Milton: Children in hospital should continue to have access to as much schooling as their medical condition allows, so that they are able to maintain the momentum of their education, and in order to address their developmental needs. Education is provided in a number of ways, including the provision of a hospital school or hospital teaching service. The precise nature of educational provision in hospital is a matter for local arrangement, dependant on demand and the individual needs of the children.

Hospitals: Standards

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the variation in the outcomes of his Department's assessment and the Dr Foster Hospital Guide 2010 in respect of each hospital trust. [29593]

Mr Simon Burns: The Care Quality Commission (CQC) ensures that essential standards of safety and quality are being met by all providers. Monitor regulate foundation trusts to ensure that they meet all statutory and contract actual requirements. All hospitals, including those mentioned in the Dr Foster Hospital Guide 2010, have been registered by the CQC, details of which can be found on the Commission's website at:

http://caredirectory.cqc.org.uk/caredirectory/searchthecaredirectory.cfm

CQC routinely uses information like Dr Foster the Hospital Guide to identify where there are risks that hospital care is not meeting essential standards.

Mental Illness

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many of the individuals allocated a personal budget in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10 had mental health needs; [29199]

(2) how many direct payment users have mental health needs; [29200]

(3) how many people allocated individual budgets in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10 had mental health needs. [29203]

Paul Burstow: On 31 March 2009 in England, 900 adults aged 18-64 with mental health needs were allocated a personal budget.

The NHS Information Centre for health and social care collects and publishes information on the number of people receiving personal budgets and direct payments from councils with adult social services responsibilities. The most recent England level information relates to 2008-09. Final data from 2009-10 are expected to be published in 2011.

Data were not collected on the number of personal budgets allocated in financial year 2008-09; these data were collected for 2009-10, but have not yet been published. In 2008-09, the count of people, aged 18 to 64, receiving a personal budget on 31 March 2009 whose primary care need was mental health was collected. Data for other age groups were not collected by primary care need in 2008-09.

On 31 March 2009 in England there were 7,000 direct payment users with mental health needs. Of these 4,600 were aged 18-64, 800 were aged 65-74 and 1,700 were aged 75 and over. It should be noted that figures may not add up due to rounding.

The NHS Information Centre does not collect information on the number of individual budgets. The terms individual budget and personal budget were used synonymously during the pilot stage of the personalisation project for social care in 2007-08. However, 'personal budget' is the term now being used to cover direct (cash) payments (held by the individual) and personal budgets (managed by the council on the individual's behalf), and these relate to social care funding only.

Individual budgets is now the term used for a notional amount of funding from a variety of public funds which may include social care funding.

64 pilots involving 3,000 people are currently under way to inform the roll out of personal healthcare budgets with an aim to make it possible to combine health and care personal budgets in the future.

NHS: Business Interests

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether *(a)* Bassetlaw primary care trust and *(b)* Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust awarded contracts to companies in respect of which non-executive members of the trust registered an interest in (i) 2009 and (ii) 2010. [29594]

Mr Simon Burns: This information is not held centrally. The information requested may be available directly from Bassetlaw primary care trust and Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Palliative Care: Prisoners

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what palliative care provision there is for prisoners in the North West. [29108]

Paul Burstow: Since April 2006, commissioning responsibility for prison health services has been fully devolved to the national health service. Palliative care for prisoners is therefore provided according to both local circumstance and the needs of the individual prisoner. Local health services work with the prison to provide care based on NHS models of best practice following a thorough risk assessment. This may involve the prisoner being returned to the community during the last months of their life or being cared for through local adaptions to the prison environment. The response will vary according to security issues and the wishes of the prisoner.

Prison Service Order 3050 sets out the policy for prisoners who require end of life care. A copy has been placed in the Library. The Department and the National

Offender Management Service shortly expect to publish guidance for managing end of life for prisons, based on current best practice in both the community and prison environment.

Primary Care Trusts

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to bring forward legislative proposals for the abolition of primary care trusts. [29309]

Mr Simon Burns: The Government will publish the consultation on the implementation of the White Paper, "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS" this month. This will contain further detail about the provisions to be included in the Health and Social Care Bill, including the abolition of primary care trusts. The Bill itself will follow in the new year.

Prostate Cancer: Health Education

Oliver Colvile: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what strategy his Department has to raise awareness of prostate cancer. [28101]

Paul Burstow: Through the Prostate Cancer Risk Management Programme (PCRMP) the Department works to raise awareness of prostate cancer in men. The PCRMP ensures that men without symptoms can have a prostate specific antigen (PSA) test free on the national health service if they request one. PRCMP information packs have been provided to all general practitioners (GPs) in England, and the packs include patient information sheets for GPs to give to men who are considering having a PSA test. Clinicians should give men access to PSA tests, if requested, in accordance with the PCRMP.

With health professionals, patient groups and the voluntary sector, the Department has developed key messages for a number of cancers, including prostate cancer. These are available on the NHS Choices website. The Department encourages charities and other stakeholders to use them widely in awareness raising activities.

Through the National Awareness and Early Diagnosis Initiative (NAEDI) the Department and the Football Foundation jointly funded the Ahead of the Game programme. Ahead of the Game is a pilot programme, which uses the appeal of football to raise awareness of lung, bowel and prostate cancers in men aged 55 and over.

The Cancer Reform Strategy Review, currently under way, is examining how best to promote awareness of the signs and symptoms of cancer and encourage people to go to their GP if they experience persistent symptoms.

Smoking: Health Services

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding his Department allocated to NHS smoking cessation services in the period *(a)* 2007-10 and *(b)* 2010-13. [29301]

Anne Milton: Funding for national health service smoking cessation services is included in primary care trust (PCT) allocations. The allocations are not broken down by policy area, however, the Department sets out the priorities for NHS delivery in the Operating Framework that is published each year.

According to statistics published by the NHS Information Centre, total expenditure by the NHS on stop smoking services was:

(a) April 2007 to March 2008: approximately £61 million

(b) April 2008 to March 2009: approximately £74 million

(c) April 2009 to March 2010: approximately £83.9 million.

These figures do not include expenditure by the NHS on prescribed stop smoking medicines.

The NHS Information Centre data on NHS Stop Smoking Services are available online at:

www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/health-and-lifestyles/nhs-stop-smoking-services

PCTs have been informed of their revenue allocations up to 2010-11. Revenue allocations post 2010-11 will be announced later this year.

Strokes: Nottinghamshire and Sheffield

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions thrombolysis treatment has been used to treat stroke patients in *(a)* Bassetlaw, *(b)* Sheffield, *(c)* Nottingham and *(d)* Sheffield hospitals in the last 12 months. [29662]

Mr Simon Burns: The information requested is not held centrally. This information may be available directly from the national health service organisations concerned.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support Agency

Bill Esterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Child Support Agency operates target response times for correspondence from hon. Members' offices. [29863]

Maria Miller: The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission is responsible for the child maintenance system. I have asked the Child Maintenance Commissioner to write to the hon. Member with the information requested and I have seen the response.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Child Maintenance Commissioner as the Child Support Agency is now the responsibility of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Child Support Agency operates target response times for correspondence from hon. Members' offices. [29863]

The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission has a target of responding to 95% of correspondence received from Members of Parliament within 20 working days.

I hope you find this answer helpful.

Child Support Agency: Correspondence

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how long on average it took for the Child Support Agency to respond to contact by *(a)* telephone, *(b)* post and *(c)* e-mail in the latest period for which figures are available. [21375]

Maria Miller: The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission is responsible for the child maintenance system. I have asked the Child Maintenance Commissioner to write to the hon. Member with the information requested and I have seen the response.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Child Maintenance Commissioner as the Child Support Agency is now the responsibility of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how long on average it took for the Child Support Agency to respond when contacted by (a) telephone (b) post and (c) e-mail in the latest period for which figures are available. [21375]

Information on how long on average it took the Child Support Agency to respond when contacted by (a) telephone (b) post and (c) e-mail is not available as all general enquiries are not recorded for management information purposes.

The Child Support Agency has a published Client Charter that states the aim to answer telephone calls within one minute and reply to letters and either resolve complaints, or agree next steps, within three weeks of receiving them.

Telephony performance is recorded and the latest available telephony figures show that in the year to September 2010, 99.5% of calls available to staff were answered, with the calls answered from a queue in an average of 9 seconds.

In the same time period, 98.4% of calls were answered within 60 seconds and 96.8% were answered within 30 seconds.

I hope you find this answer helpful.

Disability Living Allowance: Scotland

Mr Frank Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the *(a)* effects on and *(b)* cost to local authorities in Scotland of the removal of the mobility component of the disability living allowance from residents in publicly-funded care homes. [27212]

Maria Miller: Social care is a devolved matter. The Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 places a duty on local authorities to assess the social care needs of the people in their area and to provide care to meet these needs. Local authorities also have a responsibility to make the best use of available resources.

We estimate that approximately 80,000 people in Great Britain who claim disability living allowance and live in residential care will be affected by the measure to cease paying the mobility component from October 2012.

Employment and Support Allowance

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the number of contributory employment and support allowance recipients who will become entitled to income-related employment and support allowance after the implementation of the proposals in the comprehensive spending review; [26253]

(2) what estimate he has made of the effects on the level of the employment and support allowance (ESA) caseload of placing time limits on contributory ESA. [26637]

Maria Miller: There are a number of variables which will impact the number of people affected by the proposal to time limit contributory ESA to one year for those in the work-related activity group, including the reassessment of incapacity benefit cases, people moving into work and people being able to qualify for income-related benefits after the 12-month limit for the contributory benefit is reached.

Current estimates suggest around 700,000 people will have been affected by the proposal to time limit contributory ESA by 2015-16, of which it is expected that around 60% will be fully or partially compensated by income-related ESA. There will always be a safety net to support those who have no means of supporting themselves.

The estimates are subject to change as more information on customers in the work related activity group becomes available.

Housing Benefit

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will assess the merits of giving local authorities greater flexibility in how they correspond with claimants of housing benefit and council tax benefit when contacting them by letter for the purposes of ensuring that the benefit entitlement is clearly communicated. [28796]

Steve Webb: The housing benefit and council tax benefit regulations prescribe key elements that must be included in the decision notifications that local authorities send to claimants when informing them about their benefit entitlement. Claimants need this information so that they can work out how their benefit awards have been calculated and confirm that their circumstances have correctly been taken into account. There are no current plans to amend the regulations, but we keep this under review and will continue to consider feedback from local authorities, claimants and representative organisations.

Although certain information must be included in decision notifications, local authorities have the discretion to decide how best to present it, and to design letters that communicate as clearly as possible what the claimant needs to know. To help with this, officials in my Department have been working with representatives of several local authorities to explore ways of making decision notifications easier to understand.

Housing Benefit: Greater London

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department has made an assessment of the likely effects of reductions in levels of housing benefit on homelessness levels in *(a)* West Ham constituency, *(b)* the London borough of Newham and *(c)* London in each of the next five years. [27631]

Steve Webb: The information required to carry out this assessment is not available. We published an impact assessment on 30 November for the changes to local housing allowance rates from April 2011. The assessment does not contain an estimate of the impact on homelessness as we cannot anticipate the behaviours of tenants or their landlords. To reduce the risk of households becoming homeless we have a substantial package of financial and practical support in place and we are giving households up to nine months transitional protection so that they can look for alternative accommodation if they need to. The impact assessment is available on the Department for Work and Pensions website.

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/lha-impact-nov10.pdf

Jobseeker's Allowance

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* the South East, *(c)* Oxfordshire and *(d)* Oxford West and Abingdon constituency have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance since January 2010. [21053]

Mr Hurd: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking how many people in (a) the UK, (b) the South East (c) Oxfordshire and (d) Oxford West and Abingdon constituency have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance since January 2010. (21053)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles the number of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) from the Jobcentre Plus administrative system.

Table 1 shows the number of people resident in (a) the UK, (b) the South East (c) Oxfordshire and (d) Oxford West and Abingdon constituency who were in receipt of JSA in each month since January 2010. The data have been provided from January 2010 to the latest available period up to October 2010.

National and local area estimates for many labour market statistics, including employment, unemployment and claimant count are available on the NOMIS website at:

http://www.nomisweb.co.uk

Table 1: Number of persons claiming jobseeker's allowance residing in the UK, the South East, Oxfordshire and Oxford West and Abingdon constituency

	UK	*South East*	*Oxfordshire*	*Oxford West and Abingdon*
2010				
January	1,654,025	162,595	9,156	1,258
February	1,657,041	161,432	8,819	1,210
March	1,614,852	156,288	8,584	1,163
April	1,568,128	151,906	8,749	1,217
May	1,502,155	142,362	7,780	1,070
June	1,444,096	134,135	7,360	1,038
July	1,441,035	132,042	7,430	1,065
August	1,456,023	132,198	7,518	1,050
September	1,439,601	130,442	7,493	1,027
October	1,416,785	127,424	7,358	1,010

Source:
Jobcentre Plus administrative system.

Members: Correspondence

Amber Rudd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the Minister for Housing plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Hastings and Rye of 25 October 2010 reference AR/BW/0008, on housing benefit. [29860]

Chris Grayling: A reply was sent to my hon. Friend on 10 November 2010.

National Employment Savings Trust Scheme

Rachel Reeves: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what consideration he has given to establishing a mechanism to prevent a conflict of interest arising for potential asset managers bidding in the National Employment Savings Trust tendering process. [29290]

Steve Webb: The procurement of the investment managers for the initial set of investment mandates has been outsourced to investment advisers, following a mini-competition under NEST Corporation's investment adviser framework. The investment advisers will evaluate all bids received strictly in accordance with objective based evaluation criteria that reflect NEST Corporation requirements.

NEST Corporation policy is that all staff involved in the evaluation of tenders are required to sign a statement in which they declare any conflicts of interest. In the event that a conflict arises consideration is given whether that person should withdraw from the evaluation process.

NEST Corporation will review the recommendations made by the Investment advisers and the basis upon which they have reached those recommendations.

The criteria used for the evaluation of the tender responses is agreed in advance of the tenders being received. No external factors that are not pertinent to the responses will be taken into account.

New Businesses: Bradford

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 2 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 1005W, on new businesses: Bradford, what plans he has for *(a)* funding, *(b)* eligibility and *(c)* delivery of the new enterprise allowance. [29750]

Chris Grayling: The information is as follows:

(a) Funding for the new enterprise allowance for the years 2010-11 and 2011-12 has been agreed with HMT on the basis that it will give up to 10,000 unemployed people per year access to the advice and support they need to start their own business.

(b) The new enterprise allowance will be open to jobseeker's allowance customers in the targeted areas who have been claiming jobseeker's allowance for more than six months and have not joined the Work Programme. The new enterprise allowance will be targeted on the areas in Great Britain that are likely to benefit most from an increase in the share of private sector employment. Details of the target areas have been published on the Department's website:

www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/get-britain-working/

(c) Delivery options have yet to be finalised and agreed, but we envisage a role for Jobcentre Plus working alongside the voluntary and enterprise sectors to create new partnerships to build a network of mentors and ensure unemployed people can get the business support they need. We intend to trailblaze some elements of the new enterprise allowance starting in Merseyside from the end of January 2011, before rolling out the full new enterprise allowance in the remaining targeted areas from April 2011.

New Enterprise Allowance

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which areas will participate in the new enterprise allowance pilots; and when these pilots will begin. [28740]

Chris Grayling: The new enterprise allowance will be targeted on areas in Great Britain that are likely to benefit most from an increase in the share of private sector employment. We intend to trail blaze elements of the new enterprise allowance starting in Merseyside from the end of January 2011, before rolling out the full new enterprise allowance in the remaining targeted areas from April 2011. Details of the target areas have been published on the Department's website:

www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/get-britain-working/

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what mechanism he plans to establish to assess applications for new enterprise allowance payments. [28741]

Chris Grayling: The process for assessing applications for the new enterprise allowance has yet to be finalised and agreed. We are developing a process that will ensure that customers who have a viable, sustainable business proposition with growth potential get the business support they need to succeed.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the average monetary value of all payments under the new enterprise allowance for a recipient. [28742]

Chris Grayling: Each customer can get access to financial support of around £2,000. This consists of a weekly allowance worth up to £1,275 over a six month period, allowing a customer to establish their business and its cash flow. In addition, where a customer needs start-up capital they may access a loan of up to £1,000 to help them with start-up costs such as buying their initial equipment.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many new businesses he expects to be established as a result of support from the new enterprise allowance by *(a)* April 2011, *(b)* October 2011, *(c)* January 2012 and *(d)* April 2012. [28743]

Chris Grayling: Through the new enterprise allowance in 2011-12, we want to give up to 10,000 unemployed people access to the advice and support they need to start their own business, with scope to go further in future years.

Older People: Employment

Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people aged 50 years and over moved off benefits and into work in the last 12 months. [27319]

Chris Grayling: Jobseeker's allowance is the only benefit that has reliable information on whether claimants flowing off have entered employment. However, even for JSA the information is incomplete as individuals are not required to provide a reason for leaving the benefit and a significant minority choose not to complete the exit form that asks for this information.

The number of people aged 50 and over known to have moved off JSA and into work in the last 12 months is 227,000 (44% of all off-flows from this age group). However, a further 196,000 JSA leavers (38% of all off-flows aged 50 years and over) were categorised as: ceased claiming; failed to sign; or information about them is unknown. This indicates that the number of people aged 50 and over moving off JSA and into work is likely to be significantly higher than is officially recorded.

Pensioners: Poverty

Mr Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of pensioners aged *(a)* between 60 and 65, *(b)* between 65 and 70, *(c)* between 70 and 75, *(d)* between 75 and 80 and *(e)* 80 years or above live in relative poverty; and if he will make a statement. [29778]

Steve Webb: Estimates of pensioner poverty are published in the Households Below Average Income series. The most commonly used measure of pensioner poverty relates to those people with incomes below 60% of contemporary median income, after housing costs. This is often referred to as relative poverty.

The latest Households Below Average Income publication was based on Family Resources Survey data from 2008-09. The percentage of pensioners in relative poverty, split by age group, is shown in the following table:

Age group	*Percentage with income below 60% of contemporary median (relative poverty)*
60-64	16
65-69	15
70-74	14
75-79	16
80 and above	19
All pensioners	16

Notes:

1. These statistics are based on the Households Below Average Income series, sourced from the Family Resources Survey.
2. All estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to uncertainty. Small differences should be treated with caution as these will be affected by sampling error and variability in non-response.
3. The income measures used to derive the estimates shown employ the same methodology as the Department for Work and Pensions publication "Households Below Average Income" (HBAI) series, which uses disposable household income, adjusted (or 'equivalised') for household size and composition, as an income measure as a proxy for standard of living.
4. For the Households Below Average Income series, incomes have been equivalised using Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) modified equivalisation factors.
5. Proportions of pensioners in low-income households have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.

Social Security Benefits

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to simplify the application procedures for state benefits; and if he will make a statement. [28752]

Steve Webb: We are creating a new universal credit which will replace working tax credit, child tax credit, housing benefit, income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance and income-related employment and support allowance. By using the best data technology available we will streamline the administration and claiming process, making it easier for people to see that they are better off for every pound they earn and minimise opportunities for fraud and error.

Unemployment: Scotland

Cathy Jamieson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent estimate he has made of the number of workless households in *(a)* Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency, *(b)* Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk constituency and *(c)* Scotland. [24780]

Mr Hurd: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking for the number of workless households in a) Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency, b) Berwickshire Roxburgh and Selkirk constituency and c) Scotland. [24780].

The figures requested come from the Annual Population Survey household datasets, the attached table provides estimates for 2009. A workless household is defined as a household that contains at least one person aged 16 to 64 and where all individuals aged 16 and over are not in employment.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the APS are subject to a margin of uncertainty as different samples give different results. These estimates are such that from all samples possible there would be 95 per cent certainty that the true estimate would lie within the lower and upper bounds given.

Table 1: Workless households[1] in Kilmarnock and Loudoun, Berwickshire Roxburgh and Selkirk and Scotland, 2009

Thousand

January-December 2009	*Estimate*	*Lower bound*[2]	*Upper bound*[2]
Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency	10	8	12
Berwickshire Roxburgh and Selkirk constituency	6	5	7
Scotland	369	355	384

[1] Households containing at least one person aged 16-64, where all individuals aged 16 or over are not in employment.

[2] 95% confidence interval which means that from all samples possible there would be 95% certainty that the true estimate would lie within the lower and upper bounds.

Source:

APS household dataset

Unemployment: Young People

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to reduce the weekly cost of youth unemployment. [29590]

Chris Grayling: The Government recognise that to reduce the weekly cost of youth unemployment, we need to help young people into work. We are focusing on supporting young people into private sector employment. We are tackling the deficit to restore growth in the economy and create jobs that young people who are job ready can access.

Next year we are introducing a Work programme which young people will access and which will respond to the personalised needs of each individual. In addition we are making Jobcentre Plus more flexible to help young people to find the right support to make the transition into work.

Where lack of work experience is a barrier for young people we are providing flexible job search support through Jobcentre Plus, creating work experience opportunities, encouraging volunteering for all unemployed people and investing in training and apprenticeships.

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of 16 to 24-year-olds out of work for more than 12 months. [29591]

Chris Grayling: The Government are committed to tackling youth unemployment. We aim to have the new Work programme in place nationally by the summer of 2011. This will offer integrated employment support to young people helping them move into sustained employment rather than temporary jobs. Young people aged 18-24 will be referred to the Work programme from nine months. Prior to the Work programme we will be giving Jobcentre Plus advisers more flexibility to work with young people to make the transition into employment. This journey might include, for example, work experience, pre-apprenticeship training, an apprenticeship, a further education course or other training.

Until the Work programme is introduced, young people will continue to have access to the existing range of services. Young unemployed people registering with Jobcentre Plus have access to a named personal adviser from the first day of their claim. The personal adviser works with them to create a personalised back-to-work plan. This support will continue throughout the jobseeker's spell of unemployment, as will access to the existing range of opportunities, support and advice to help them find employment.

In order to reduce the number of younger, 16 to 18-year-olds becoming long-term unemployed the Government want to ensure that the next generation of school leavers are equipped for the future, raising attainment for all children and closing the gap between the richest and poorest. We are considering how best to provide access for young people to high quality careers education which will help them navigate the complex choices on offer to them about learning, careers and wider lifestyle options.

Universal Credit

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of people who will face *(a)* higher and *(b)* lower marginal deduction rates following full implementation of the universal credit according to the modelling used as the basis for his White Paper. [26023]

Chris Grayling: Following full implementation of universal credit, marginal deduction rates will reduce for around 1.5 million workers in total, with the average (median) reduction in marginal deduction rate being 20 percentage points. Included in this total, universal credit will particularly improve earnings incentives for 700,000 low-earning workers, reducing the highest marginal deduction rates from 95.8% to around 76%.

Some households will see their marginal deduction rates increase under universal credit. For example, households previously receiving tax credits only will see a small increase in their marginal deduction rate from 73% to around 76%. In addition, because universal credit allows low-earning households to keep more of their earnings, some households who previously received no state support will now do so. As a consequence they will experience a higher marginal deduction rate than they otherwise would have done but they will be better off financially.

Marginal deduction rates will increase for around 2 million workers in total following full implementation of universal credit. However, the average (median) increase will only be 4 percentage points.

Winter Fuel Payments: Crewe and Nantwich

Mr Timpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Crewe and Nantwich constituency received the winter fuel allowance in the latest period for which figures are available. [29756]

Steve Webb: The information is available in the document "Winter Fuel Payment recipients 2009-2010 by Parliamentary Constituencies and Gender" (2010 boundaries). This is available in the Commons Library and on the internet at:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?paqe=wfp

Winter Fuel Payments: Kilmarnock

Cathy Jamieson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people aged *(a)* 60 to 65, *(b)* 65 to 70, *(c)* 70 to 80 and *(d)* over 80 years were paid the winter fuel allowance in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency in each year since 2005. [17132]

Steve Webb: The information is in the table.

Winter fuel payment recipients in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency: Time series by age group

	2009-10	*2008-09*	*2007-08*	*2006-07*	*2005-06*
Number	20,530	20,040	19,570	18,940	18,720
Aged					
Under 60	40	30	40	20	
60 to 64	5,730	5,550	5,370	4,900	
65 to 69	4,520	4,420	4,310	4,340	
70 to 79	6,800	6,680	6,570	6,420	
80 and over	3,430	3,370	3,290	3,260	

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 and therefore totals may not sum.
2. Constituencies used are for the Westminster Parliament of May 2005.
3. DWP are currently working to produce 2009-10 WFP figures for the Westminster Parliament of May 2010.
4. The 'under 60' category contains cases where an IS/JSA claimant receives a payment on behalf of their partner who is aged 60 or over.
5. The age breakdown for 2005-06 winter fuel payments shows a larger than expected number of recipients aged under 60 compared with subsequent years. The age breakdown has been withdrawn while the figures are investigated.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100% data.

TRANSPORT

BRB (Residuary) Ltd

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the procedure will be for the disposal of the assets of BRB (Residuary) Ltd. [29256]

Mrs Villiers: BRB (Residuary) Ltd disposes of its surplus land assets in accordance with guidance issued by the Department for Transport in July 2007. This guidance is available on the company's website at:

www.brbr.co.uk

The consultation process set out in that guidance has now been completed. However, some properties continue to be held by the company pending decisions on their future use and ownership by the Department.

First Great Western: Electrification

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what work his Department carried out on its plans for electrification of the Great Western main line between London and Swansea in the period *(a)* 23 July 2009 to 11 May 2010 and *(b)* 12 May 2010 to 24 November 2010. [27678]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 30 November 2010]*: The Department for Transport has been considering electrification of the Great Western line as part of its work on delivering new rolling stock and assessing the future of the Intercity Express Programme. This work has been on-going throughout both periods.

Football: World Cup

Graham Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent on entertainment activities related to the 2010 FIFA World cup. [27357]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport has no records of any expenditure for entertainment activities related to the 2010 FIFA World cup.

Full details of Department for Transport Ministers and senior officials' business expenses, including hospitality and gifts can be found on the DFT website at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/transparency/

Fuels: Prices

Dr Poulter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if his Department will bring forward proposals to limit petrol and diesel price rises in the UK. [29341]

Justine Greening: I have been asked to reply.

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Richmond Park (Zac Goldsmith) on 1 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 665W.

Gospel Oak Railway Line: Electrification

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions his Department has had with the Mayor of London on electrification of the Barking to Gospel Oak railway line. [29955]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport has not had any recent discussions with the Mayor of London on electrification of the line between Gospel Oak and Barking.

Lower Thames Crossing

Stephen Metcalfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department has to consult local residents on a new Lower Thames Crossing; when he expects such consultation to take place; and if he will make a statement. [29721]

Mike Penning: The Department for Transport made clear in its spending review announcement that it would embark on a review of the options for future capacity in the Lower Thames.

Following that review, which is expected to take around 12 to 18 months to complete, the Department's intention, as part of the statutory process, would be to publicly consult on the merits of the potential options. The timing of such consultation has yet to be determined.

M25

Stephen Metcalfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what plans his Department has to improve junctions 30 and 31 of the M25; what recent representations he has received on the junctions; and if he will make a statement; [29718]

(2) what plans his Department has to improve the road network in South Essex; what recent representations he has received on that part of the road network; and if he will make a statement; [29719]

(3) what plans his Department has to improve the A13 between Stanford-le-Hope and junctions 30 and 31 of the M25; what recent representations he has received on that part of the road network; and if he will make a statement. [29720]

Mike Penning: The Secretary of State's statement of 26 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 177-79, "Investment in Highways and Local Transport Schemes", identified the M25 junction 30/A13 corridor scheme as one which the Highways Agency would continue to develop for a potential start of construction in future spending review periods.

I would also refer my hon. Friend to my answer of 11 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 54-55W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Thurrock (Jackie Doyle-Price) about the M25 Junction 30 scheme.

M25: Closures

Stephen Metcalfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the financial effects on the economy of closures of the M25. [29717]

Mike Penning: The total economic impact of traffic delay is measured by the Department's transport appraisal tool QUADRO, which costs this at £11.28 per vehicle hour delay (based on 2002 prices). However, we do not estimate the specific costs of each individual road closure due to the complexity of the assessment required, for example, the mix of trip purposes, vehicle types and number of occupants in each vehicle.

The financial effects to the economy would very much depend on the day, time of day and the number of vehicles affected, as well as the effectiveness of diversion routes.

Motorways: Accidents

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many collisions involving a motor vehicle there have been on the A1 at Elkesley in 2010 to date. [29475]

Mike Penning: There have been six reported collisions involving motor vehicles on the A1 near Elkesley (within 0.62 miles of the village centre in both directions) between the 1 January 2010 and 30 June 2010. This is the latest information available.

Public Transport: Fares

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what information his Department holds for benchmarking purposes on *(a)* bus and *(b)* light rail and underground fares in cities (i) in the UK and (ii) overseas. [29704]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport does not hold any information for the purpose of benchmarking bus, light rail or underground fares, either for UK or overseas cities.

However, the Department publishes fares indices for local bus services. This does not measure fare levels, but does show the relative rates of change since 1995 in local bus fares in London, English metropolitan areas, English non-metropolitan areas, Scotland and Wales. Latest published statistics are available at:

www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/public/bus/costs/bus0405.xls

Public Transport: Public Consultation

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department takes to include reduced-fare users in consultations on the future of public transport services. [29337]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport works to ensure that everybody who has an interest is able to express their views in its consultation exercises. Reasonable adjustments are made where necessary and consultation documents are available in alternative formats.

Equality impact assessments are carried out for all new transport proposals, to take account of the needs of different groups. This includes disabled and older people who are eligible for travel concessions.

Railways: Electrification

Julie Hilling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether a rail service between Preston and Manchester via Chorley and Bolton will be maintained following electrification of the Manchester to Newton-le-Willows line. [28697]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 8 December 2010]:* The Government have no plans to cease operation of services over the route between Preston and Manchester via Chorley and Bolton following completion of electrification of the Manchester to Newton-le-Willows line.

Railways: Franchises

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make standard off-peak travel times a requirement for new rail franchisees. [22343]

Mrs Villiers: There are no plans to standardise off-peak travel times for new rail franchisees.

Railways: Passengers

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will bring forward proposals to ensure that rail passengers are entitled to a seat in return for the fare paid; and if he will make a statement. [29641]

Mrs Villiers: The National Conditions of Carriage set out the obligations on train operators in relation to the fare that has been paid.

We have not carried out an assessment of the cost and value for money of a requirement that all passengers should gain a seat on any train, at any time. However, the cost would be large given the significant additional rolling stock and infrastructure changes that would be required to meet such a commitment, especially on routes within Metropolitan areas such as London.

The rail industry planning standard is that for all journeys of more than 20 minutes passengers should gain a seat.

The Government remain committed to increasing the carrying capacity of the rail network. We recently confirmed that major infrastructure schemes such as Crossrail and Thameslink would be constructed and that some 2,100 additional carriages would be in service on the network by 2019.

By spring 2011 we expect some 153 more carriages to be operating on the First Capital Connect franchise than the level seen in 2009.

Railways: Repairs and Maintenance

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much and what proportion of the £90 million allocated to improving rail platforms in the 2010 spending review will be spent in *(a)* Coventry, *(b)* the West Midlands and *(c)* the South East. [28095]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* The detailed allocation of funding for platform improvements is a matter for Network Rail, which is funded to deliver a programme of capacity enhancements. However, the nature of these improvements will depend on the train service changes put forward by the train operating companies to deliver the additional passenger capacity that the Government wish to provide.

Railways: Subsidies

Mr Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department provided in public subsidy to each train operating company in *(a)* 2007-08, *(b)* 2008-09 and *(c)* 2009-10; and how many passengers were carried by each such company in each such year. [29083]

Mrs Villiers: The Office of Rail Regulation publishes actual subsidy payments and information on passenger journeys in its National Rail Trends document. This information for 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10 can be found on the Office of Rail Regulation website as follows:

http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/375.pdf

http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/YEARBOOK0809-v22.pdf

http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/nrt-yearbook-2009-10.pdf

In addition, copies are available in the Libraries of the House.

Road Traffic: Black Cat

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what bids for funding have been made to improve traffic flow at the Black Cat roundabout on the A1 in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [29225]

Mike Penning: During the last five years there has been one bid for funding in 2011-12 to improve traffic flow at the Black Cat roundabout.

The bid was for £200,000 to enable detailed design of an improvement scheme.

The process for allocating funding for future years is ongoing.

Road Traffic: Newark

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what bids for funding have been made to improve traffic flows on the A1 south of Newark in the last five years for which figures are available; and what the outcome of the bid was in each case. [29223]

Mike Penning: There has been one scheme to improve the traffic flows on the A1 within the east midlands region, that lies south of Newark and north of Peterborough, in the last five years. This was a Major Projects scheme to replace six junctions on the A1 with grade separated junctions.

The resulting junction is similar to those on motorways and results in improved journey times, allowing the local traffic to cross the main trunk road or join using a slip road. Replacing these single level roundabouts with grade separated junctions has reduced congestion, queuing and delays in these areas and improved the safety record.

Three of the junctions targeted as part of this scheme are between Newark and Peterborough, Gonerby Moor (north of Grantham), Colsterworth North and South (classified as a single junction for the purposes of the scheme) and Carpenter's Wood.

The scheme started in 2006 and completed in 2009. The total value was £95 million. As a result of this planned major improvement, no additional funding was bid for to improve traffic flows during this period.

Roads: Accidents

Matthew Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average *(a)* death, *(b)* injury and *(c)* personal injury rate from road traffic accidents was per mile of (i) trunk A-roads, (ii) all A-roads and (iii) all roads in the latest period for which figures are available. [29540]

Mike Penning: The information requested is given in the following table.

Reported casualties in personal injury road accidents per mile of road, by type of road: England, 2009

	Casualties	
Type of road	*Killed*	*Injured*[1]
Trunk A-roads	0.06	3.88
All A roads	0.07	6.10
All roads	0.01	1.04

[1] Seriously or slightly injured.

Note:

Figures for "injury" and "personal injury" are the same.

Waterloo Station

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish a list of the *(a)* individuals and *(b)* organisations from whom he has received representations on the future of the Waterloo International terminal. [29189]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport has received representations from the following individuals and organisations in the past six months:

(a) Individuals

Kate Hoey MP

Caroline Pidgeon AM

Two members of the general public.

(b) Organisations

South Bank Employers' Group.

West Coast Main Line

Mr Timpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to announce his decision on the West Coast main line franchise. [29663]

Mrs Villiers: The Secretary of State announced his intentions to refranchise the Intercity West Coast franchise from 2012 until the planned opening of HS2 in 2026 by way of a written ministerial statement on 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 15-18WS.

Written Questions: Government Responses

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to reply to Question 20169, on the cap on rail fares, tabled on 25 October 2010. [29767]

Mrs Villiers: I responded to the question on 8 December 2010.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Energy Supply

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what the cost was of *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas supplied to his Department's offices at 3 Whitehall Place in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [29675]

Gregory Barker: The following table shows the energy costs for 3 Whitehall Place over the last 12 months for which we currently have data (rounded to the nearest pound).

£

	Electricity invoice cost	*Gas invoice cost*
2009		
November	12,624	1,677
December	13,117	2,159
2010		
January	13,739	2,776
February	13,264	2,533
March	12,011	2,001
April	13,572	1,256
May	13,767	1,218
June	14,718	1,064
July	14,964	1,087
August	13,663	1,069
September	13,451	1,014
October	13,710	738

Invoices are received in the middle of each month for the previous month's energy use, so we do not yet have costs for November 2010.

Members: Correspondence

Mr Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change when he plans to respond to the letters from the hon. Member for Basildon and Billericay of 18 October and 30 November 2010 on cheapest tariff information. [29657]

Charles Hendry: I have responded to my hon. Friend the Member for Basildon and Billericay on 9 December.

CABINET OFFICE

Charity Commission: Finance

Bill Esterson: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what assessment he has made of the potential effects of the outcome of the comprehensive spending review on the ability of the Charity Commission to *(a)* provide advice to charities and *(b)* reduce the incidence of fraud. [29322]

Mr Hurd: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to a question from the hon. Member for Liverpool, Riverside (Mrs Ellman) on 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 880-81W.

Civil Servants: Recruitment

Dr Huppert: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether he has plans to increase the number of civil servant entrants on the science and engineering fast stream. [29871]

Mr Hurd: Civil service fast streamers are recruited to meet departmental demand from across the civil service. The Cabinet Office therefore recruits the number of science and engineering fast streamers required to fulfil the identified need. Science and engineering fast Streamers bring specialist knowledge and evidence-based analysis skills to bear on their work and the civil service remains committed to making best use of those skills in future.

Dr Huppert: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many science and engineering fast streamers were recruited by each Government Department in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and how many such fast streamers are planned to be recruited in future years. [29872]

Mr Maude: The number of science and engineering fast streamers recruited in each of the last five years for which figures are available are shown in the following table.

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) (including previous incarnations as BERR DIUS and DTI)	5	4	4	9	6
Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC)					1
Department for Environment Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	1				
Ministry of Defence (MOD)	8	9	10	6	9

Figures for 2010 recruitment will be published in 2011.

Civil service fast streamers are recruited to meet departmental demand from across the civil service. The Cabinet Office therefore recruits the number of science and engineering fast streamers required to fulfil the identified need.

Immigration

Alun Cairns: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what estimate he has made of the number of immigrants from *(a)* each EU member state and *(b)* each other state resident in each parliamentary constituency. [26359]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics (ONS), I have been asked to respond to your question concerning the number of immigrants from (a) each EU member state and (b) each other state resident in each parliamentary constituency [26359].

The Office for National Statistics produces estimates of the population of the UK by country of birth and nationality using the Annual Population Survey (APS). The lowest geographical breakdown available using these estimates is local authority level. Therefore APS estimates cannot be used to state the numbers of EU citizens resident in each parliamentary constituency.

Immigration: Morocco

Dr Murrison: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what estimate he has made of the number of Moroccan nationals who were resident in the UK in each year since 2000. [28439]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics (ONS), I have been asked to respond to your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, asking how many Moroccan nationals were resident in the UK in each year since 2000. [28439].

The Office for National Statistics collects data on nationality as part of the Annual Population Survey (APS) which covers residents of the UK. The APS data are only available from 2004 onwards, so cannot be used to produce comparable figures for years before this.

The estimates for the number of Moroccan nationals for the calendar years of 2004 to 2009 are given in the table below. These data are based on a sample survey and so there is a degree of statistical uncertainty around these estimates, which is expressed through the confidence intervals in the table.

Table 1: Estimated population resident in the United Kingdom, who have Moroccan nationality 2004-09

		Thousand
	Estimate	*CI +/-*
2004	5	3
2005	7	3
2006	8	4
2007	7	3
2008	7	3
2009	9	4

CI = Confidence Interval

Source:

Annual Population Survey (APS)/Labour Force Survey (LFS), ONS

New Businesses

Martin Vickers: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what information his Department holds on the number of small and medium-sized enterprises established in the last 10 years; and what information it holds on the proportion of such enterprises which have continued to operate after three years. [28686]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the number of small and medium-sized enterprises established in the last 10 years; and what information it holds on the proportion of such enterprises that have continued to operate after three years. [28686]

Annual statistics on the number of enterprise births and survivals are available from the ONS release on business demography at:

www.statistics.gov.uk

However enterprise survival statistics are not available separately for small and medium sized enterprises. The table below contains the latest statistics available, which show enterprise births and three year survival in the UK from 2002 to 2003.

	Births	*Three-year survival*
2002	242,540	152,500
2003	267,000	169,875
2004	280,080	182,810
2005	274,855	177,840
2006	255,530	169,190
2007	280,725	[1]
2008	267,445	[1]
2009	238,025	[1]

[1] Data not available.

Public Sector: Procurement

Tom Brake: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Southend West of 24 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 254, on consultancy, what safeguards are in place to avoid any conflict of interest arising in the award of contracts; and if he will make a statement. [28644]

Mr Maude: The Government have in place robust procedures for the avoidance of any conflict of interest, including through the requirements of the Ministerial Code. These cover Ministers and their immediate family members.

With regard to the specific contract between the Cabinet Office and DLA Piper, the legal firm which employs the Deputy Prime Minister's wife, Miriam González Durántez, the Deputy Prime Minister had no involvement in the award of this contract in 2008 under the last Government. The Deputy Prime Minister is a Minister in the Cabinet Office not the Minister for the Cabinet Office and he has had no involvement in the award or management of Cabinet Office contracts.

Furthermore, the Deputy Prime Minister and Miriam González Durántez have been assiduous at all times in ensuring there is no conflict of interest between the Deputy Prime Minister's official responsibilities and their private interests. In accordance with the Ministerial Code, the Deputy Prime Minister, on appointment to office, provided the Cabinet Secretary with a list of his interests. At the same time, Miriam González Durántez had separate discussions with the Cabinet Secretary and the Cabinet Office Director of Propriety and Ethics to ensure there was no conflict between her work and the Deputy Prime Minister's official responsibilities. Procedures have been put in place to ensure any contract between DLA Piper and the Government is insulated from Miriam González Durántez's role in DLA Piper so no conflict will arise.

Vacancies

Mr Meacher: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what estimate he has made of the average number of employment vacancies *(a)* in each of the last 10 years and *(b)* in the latest period for which figures are available. [26318]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated November 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking what estimate has been made of the average number of employment vacancies (a) in each of the last 10 years and (b) in the latest period for which figures are available. (26318)

The Office for National Statistics estimates the number of vacancies from the Vacancy Survey for the United Kingdom.

Table 1 shows the number of vacancies, in the United Kingdom, for each 3 month period ending October from 2001 to 2010.

Table 1. Number of vacancies, within the United Kingdom

Average for three months ending October each year	*Total vacancies (thousand seasonally adjusted)*
2001	630
2002	600
2003	595
2004	646
2005	603
2006	611
2007	678
2008	587
2009	432
2010	453

Source:
ONS Vacancy Survey

Voluntary Work

Jessica Morden: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what steps his Department is taking to work with charities to ensure the effective deployment of volunteers. [28619]

Mr Hurd: Supporting social action is a key pillar of the Government's vision for the big society. The Cabinet Office is currently working across Government to produce a Green Paper on the Giving of Time and Money which will set out the Government's commitment to supporting the development of a culture of social action including volunteering. The Green Paper will also provide details on new volunteering programmes that are currently being developed within the Cabinet Office.

In addition the Cabinet Office is currently funding a Volunteer Management Programme which is working with civil society organisations to improve access to support for volunteer managers to enable them to effectively support volunteers within their organisations.

Voluntary Work: Young People

Margot James: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what assessment he has made of likely providers of the National Citizenship Service in *(a)* the Black Country and *(b)* the Metropolitan borough of Dudley. [28311]

Mr Hurd: Cabinet Office has announced the outcome of the commissioning process for National Citizen Service pilots in summer 2011, and I can confirm that Catch22, the Prince's Trust and V will be leading pilots that include coverage in the Black Country, and that the Prince's Trust will be delivering in the metropolitan borough of Dudley.

Margot James: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether he has received any applications for providers of the National Citizenship Service from organisations based in *(a)* the Black Country and *(b)* the metropolitan borough of Dudley. [28336]

Mr Hurd: Cabinet Office has announced the outcome of the commissioning process for National Citizen Service pilots in summer 2011. Catch22, The Prince's Trust and V will be leading pilots that include coverage in the black country including the metropolitan borough of Dudley, working with the following local delivery partners:

Catch22 is working with Pertemps Coachright (Sandwell), Nacro (Walsall) as well as the Catch22 local team in Wolverhampton.

Prince's Trust is working with West Bromwich Albion FC (West Bromwich) and Wolverhampton college (Walsall and Dudley)

V is working with Wolverhampton college (Wolverhampton)

I am unable to disclose the details of unsuccessful bidders for NCS pilots in 2011.

EDUCATION

Children in Care

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many children subject to a care order, police protection order or emergency protection order excluding children looked after under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 left care through adoption in England in each year from 1989 to 1995. [25209]

Tim Loughton: The number of children who were subject to a care order, police protection order or emergency protection order (excluding children looked after under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989), who left care through adoption in England in each year ending 31 March 1993 to 1995 is shown in the following table.

The year ending 31 March 1993 is the earliest year for which this information is available. The Children Act 1989, which came into force on 14 October 1991, introduced new classifications for the legal status of looked after children. Therefore data are not available on a comparable basis with earlier years.

Children who were adopted during the year ending 31 March who were subject to a care order, police protection order or emergency protection order[1,2,3,4] Years ending 31 March 1993 to 1995

	Number of children
1993[5]	120
1994	1,300
1995	1,000

[1] Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100 if they exceed 1000, and to the nearest 10 otherwise.

[2] Figures exclude children looked after under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 and also under an agreed series of short-term placements.

[3] Historical data may differ from older publications. This is mainly due to the implementation of amendments and corrections sent by some local authorities after the publication date of previous materials.

[4] Figures are taken from the SSDA903 return which covered all children looked after.

[5] This is the first time figures were produced, and as such should be treated with caution.

Source: SSDA903.

Curriculum: Armed Conflict

Mr Marcus Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will bring forward proposals to include in the national curriculum measures to teach school children about the UK's involvement in military conflict. [26766]

Mr Gibb: The Government believe it is important that all school children should be made aware of, and learn the lessons from, the United Kingdom's involvement in military conflict, and we have made clear our intention to restore history to the heart of the national curriculum.

We also believe that it is important that schools should help to give their pupils an awareness of the bravery and sacrifice of our armed forces, both in previous conflicts and those that continue in the present day, as many schools do, particularly around Remembrance day.

We will announce full details of the national curriculum review shortly.

Departmental Postal Services

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps his Department has taken to identify those of its services that could be provided through the Post Office network. [24919]

Tim Loughton: There are currently no policies going through the Department for Education which would require the Department to make use of the services that could be provided through the Post Office network. However, in view of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) published policy statement of the 9 November 2010 about securing the Post Office networking, if there are services that the Department would require in the near future, all options for delivery would be considered including those offered by the Post Office network.

There are clear strengths around the collection, dissemination and identity verification that the Post Office network could bring to central and local government service delivery and I invite the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth to put forward any suggestion he may have for any services from my Department which could be provided by the Post Office network.

Education Maintenance Allowance: Stoke-on-Trent

Tristram Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what percentage of young people in Stoke-on-Trent who are in receipt of education maintenance allowance would be eligible for support under the Enhanced Discretionary Learner Support Fund. [27001]

Mr Gibb: Decisions regarding the new discretionary fund will be made locally, enabling schools, colleges and training providers to target support at those young people in greatest need.

The current discretionary scheme supports around 200,000 young people each year.

Free School Meals

Amber Rudd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the number and proportion of children in *(a)* Hastings and Rye constituency, *(b)* East Sussex and *(c)* England who are entitled to free school meals whose parents or carers do not take up this benefit. [25996]

Mr Gibb: The Department collects information on the number of pupils who meet the free school meals eligibility criteria and make a claim. Information is not collected on the number of pupils who meet the eligibility criteria but do not make a claim.

Information on the number and proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at national and local authority level can be found in the Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics: January 2010 Statistical First Release at:

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000925/index.shtml

Information at parliamentary constituency level can be found in the Library.

Free Schools

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education who will be responsible for assessing the fitness to practice of teachers in free schools. [24957]

Mr Gibb: Innovation, diversity and flexibility are at the heart of the free schools policy. We want the dynamism that characterises the best independent schools to drive up standards in the state sector. In that spirit we will not be setting requirements in relation to qualifications. Instead we will expect business cases to demonstrate how governing bodies intend to guarantee the highest quality of teaching and leadership in their schools. No school will be allowed to proceed unless its proposals for quality teaching are soundly based. As employers and accountable bodies, free school academy trusts will be responsible for ensuring that the appropriate checks are carried out on all staff to ensure that only people appropriate for the post they are recruited for are appointed.

Further Education: Finance

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether funding from the Discretionary Learner Support Fund will be contingent on a minimum level of attendance at a further education institution. [26972]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 29 November 2010]*: Decisions regarding the new discretionary fund will be made locally, enabling schools, colleges and training providers to target support at those young people in greatest need.

In finalising the arrangements for the enhanced discretionary learner support fund, the Department will consult with schools, colleges and training organisations, including on what guidance is required to administer the fund effectively.

Andrew Stephenson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether further education colleges which enrol 14 to 16-year-olds eligible for funding from the pupil premium will receive a share of that funding. [27187]

Mr Gibb: The majority of 14 to 15-year-olds attending colleges are registered at a school and on a school roll so the pupil premium will be allocated to that school. Division of the pupil premium will be a matter of discussion and negotiation between the college and the "home" institution, as with the rest of the funding for the pupil.

Pre-school Education

Mrs Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what the average hourly rate per child paid to childcare providers is under his Department's nursery education funding scheme for three and four-year-olds; [22356]

(2) for how many weeks per year his Department's nursery education funding scheme will cover free childcare for two-year-olds; [22357]

(3) what the maximum hourly rate paid to childcare providers offering free childcare for two year olds will be under his Department's nursery education funding scheme; [22358]

(4) whether awards to local authorities under the nursery education funding scheme will be ring-fenced; [22359]

(5) whether he plans to set a minimum required Ofsted rating for childcare providers to be eligible to bid to provide free places for two-year-olds under his Department's nursery education funding scheme. [22360]

Sarah Teather *[holding answer 8 November 2010]*: In his statement on the outcome of the spending review on 20 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 949-65, the Chancellor announced that all three and four-year-olds would continue to receive 15 hours per week of free early education, and that, through an additional investment of £300 million, this would be extended to all disadvantaged two-year-olds by the end of the spending review period.

Further details, including on the question of how the additional £300 million will be will be allocated to local authorities, will be announced in due course. However, the extension of free early education for two-year-olds will take account of the existing pilot in all 152 local authorities in England. This currently provides free early education to these children for up to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year for around 20,000 two-year-olds drawn from the most disadvantaged families.

Under the current pilot, local authorities are strongly encouraged to use only provision rated good or outstanding by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), although they can use early years settings rated as satisfactory if the authority is satisfied that the setting is actively working towards a higher rating.

For the current pilot, the Department provides funding to local authorities calculated on the basis of £6.00 per hour in London and £4.85 outside of London.

Funding for early education for three and four-year-olds is allocated to local authorities through the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), but is not ring-fenced within the DSG. Local authorities in consultation with Schools Forums decide locally how best to distribute 3-16 funding across their locality, and local authorities set their own local rates of funding to early years providers.

An analysis of the rates paid by the 71 local authorities that have already implemented their Early Years Single Funding Formula is available on the Department's website:

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/earlyyears/fundingreform/eysff_pathfinderprogramme/

It found that the median base rates paid to different types of provider range from £3.54 to £3.76 per hour. Supplements for deprivation are also paid by all authorities, and many also provide supplements for quality and flexibility.

Public Expenditure

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether his Department has established processes to monitor any effects of proposed reductions in its expenditure. [21635]

Tim Loughton: The Department will publish indicators that it will use to monitor the spending on and performance of the education and children's services system. These, together with other information including contact with front line organisations and with the users of their services, will help the Department to monitor the effects of the recent comprehensive spending review settlement. This settlement will mean reductions in expenditure in some areas, but will include a real terms increase in funding for schools.

Pupils: Bullying

Graham Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps his Department is taking to prevent the use of *(a)* anti-Semitic and *(b)* homophobic material in part-time weekend schools. [26644]

Mr Gibb: It is unacceptable for anti-Semitic or homophobic material to be used in any part of the education of children in England. We will be bringing forward proposals to ensure that children are properly protected from such material in part-time weekend schools. In developing proposals we will take advice from Ofsted.

Schools: Rural Areas

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many schools classified by his Department as rural there were in each county in each year since 1997. [26929]

Mr Gibb: A table showing the total number of maintained schools classified as rural schools in each local authority for the years 1997, 2003, 2008, 2009 and 2010 has been placed in the House Libraries. Information for other years since 1997 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Schools: Vocational Guidance

Alison McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he plans to consult *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* schools on his plans for a school-based careers service. [25391]

Mr Gibb: The Department for Education and the Department for Business Innovation and Skills are working together to establish an all-age careers service. Schools will be responsible for securing access for their pupils to independent and impartial careers guidance.

We recognise the importance of consulting with local authorities and with schools to inform the design and development of the new service. Officials have already held discussions with representatives of both, and we intend those discussions to continue, including through the establishment of a formal advisory group.

Alison McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Education which groups of young people will be given priority for access to careers and connexion services in future. [25392]

Mr Gibb: We will establish an all-age careers service, open to all young people and adults through a range of channels, including a website, helpline and face-to-face support. We will develop the detail of the new service in discussion with local authorities, schools and the careers sector.

Alongside this, schools will take responsibility for securing access to independent, impartial careers guidance, whether from the all-age service or other high quality careers guidance services. They will have the freedom to fulfil this responsibility in ways that best meet the needs of their students.

With the establishment of an all-age careers service, local authorities will no longer be expected to provide a universal careers guidance service to young people. However, they will continue to support all vulnerable young people aged up to 19 (and up to the age of 25 for those young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities) to participate in education, employment or training. Decisions as to the targeting of such services will be for local authorities.

Alison McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps his Department is taking to ensure the professional impartiality of the *(a)* careers and *(b)* connexions services after the devolution of the service to individual schools and independent providers. [25393]

Mr Hayes: The new arrangements for careers guidance, based on the core principles of independence and professionalism, will require schools to work in partnership with expert careers advisers. We will take steps to promote high quality, impartial careers guidance by responding positively to the recently published report, 'Towards a Strong Careers Profession', produced by the Careers Profession Task Force. The report makes 14 recommendations to establish and enhance the principles of professionalism in the careers sector including the development of common professional standards and a code of ethics. The advice in this report is based on an extensive programme of consultation and evidence gathering over the past year, as well as the shared expertise of task force members. Reports on progress made against the recommendations will be made available in March 2011 and March 2012.

Special Educational Needs: Pupil Exclusions

Charlotte Leslie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many and what proportion of children with *(a)* school action plans, *(b)* school action plus plans and *(c)* statements of special educational needs were permanently excluded in each year since 2005. [26919]

Mr Gibb: Information on the number of permanent exclusions by special education need (SEN) is shown in the table.

Maintained primary, state-funded secondary and special schools[1] [2] [3]: Number of permanent exclusions by special educational needs (SEN)[4] England 2005/06 to 2008/09 (Estimates)[5]

		Permanent exclusions		
		Number of exclusions	Percentage of permanent exclusions[6]	Percentage of the relevant school population
2005/06	Pupils with SEN with statements	890	10	0.39
	Pupils at School Action Plus	3,430	37	0.88
	Pupils at School Action	1,940	21	0.23
	Pupils with no SEN	3,060	33	0.05
	All pupils[8]	9,330	100	0.12
2006/07	Pupils with SEN with statements	780	9	0.36
	Pupils at School Action Plus	3,570	41	0.86
	Pupils at School Action	1,750	20	0.20
	Pupils with no SEN	2,560	30	0.04
	All pupils[8]	8,680	100	0.12
2007/08	Pupils with SEN with statements	700	9	0.33
	Pupils at School Action Plus	3,460	43	0.78
	Pupils at School Action	1,620	20	0.18
	Pupils with no SEN	2,350	29	0.04
	All pupils[8]	8,130	100	0.11
2008/09	Pupils with SEN with statements	510	8	0.24
	Pupils at School Action Plus	2,870	44	0.62
	Pupils at School Action	1,300	20	0.14
	Pupils with no SEN	1,680	28	0.03
	All pupils[8]	6,550	100	0.09

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[2] Includes city technology colleges and academies (including all-through academies).

[3] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools. Excludes general hospital schools.

[4] SEN is recorded at the time of exclusion.

[5] Figures relating to permanent exclusions are estimates based on incomplete pupil-level data.

[6] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the total number of permanent exclusions.

[7] The number of excluded pupils by SEN stage expressed as a percentage of all pupils with the same SEN stage in primary, secondary and all special schools (excluding dually registered pupils) in January each year.

[8] Totals include a small number of pupils for whom stage of SEN was not known.

Note:

Totals may not appear to equal the sum of component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

School Census

Charlotte Leslie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many and what proportion of children with *(a)* school action plans, *(b)* school action plus plans and *(c)* statements of special educational needs received (i) one to three, (ii) three to five, (iii) five to 10 and (iv) more than 10 fixed period exclusions in each year since 2005. [26920]

Mr Gibb: Data on the special educational needs status of excluded pupils are collected at the time of exclusion.

Information on the number of excluded pupil enrolments in 2007/08 and 2008/09 is shown in the table. A pupil's SEN status can change between periods of exclusion; therefore data relating to the SEN status of excluded pupil enrolments has been based on their SEN status at the time of their most recent fixed period or permanent exclusion. To carry out this analysis for further years would incur disproportionate cost.

Maintained primary, state-funded secondary and special schools[1] [2] [3], Number and proportion of pupil enrolments with special education needs (SEN) by number of fixed period exclusions[4] [5], England 2007/08 to 2008/09

	Number of fixed period exclusions							
	1 or 2		3 or 4		5 to 10		More than 10	
	Number of pupil enrolments[4]	Percentage of school population[6]	Number of pupil enrolments[4]	Percentage of school population[6]	Number of pupil enrolments[4]	Percentage of school population[6]	Number of pupil enrolments[4]	Percentage of school population[6]
2007/08								
Pupils with SEN with statements	12,330	5.78	3,350	1.57	2,050	0.96	240	0.11
Pupils at School Action Plus	34,560	7.81	9,880	2.23	5,590	1.26	430	0.10

Maintained primary[1], state-funded secondary[2] and special schools[3]: Number and proportion of pupil enrolments with special education needs (SEN) by number of fixed period exclusions[4, 5]: England 2007/08 to 2008/09

	Number of fixed period exclusions							
	1 or 2		3 or 4		5 to 10		More than 10	
	Number of pupil enrolments[4]	Percentage of school population[6]	Number of pupil enrolments[4]	Percentage of school population[6]	Number of pupil enrolments[4]	Percentage of school population[6]	Number of pupil enrolments[4]	Percentage of school population
Pupils at School Action	37,150	4.20	6,150	0.70	2,440	0.28	110	0.01
Pupils with no SEN	80,240	1.35	7,700	0.13	2,570	0.04	110	0.00
All pupils	164,280	2.20	27,070	0.36	12,650	0.17	890	0.01
2008/09								
Pupils with SEN with statements	11,680	5.54	3,270	1.55	1,910	0.91	220	0.10
Pupils at School Action Plus	35,430	7.59	9,870	2.11	5,510	1.18	400	0.09
Pupils at School Action	35,970	3.99	5,800	0.64	2,190	0.24	110	0.01
Pupils with no SEN	73,090	1.25	6,950	0.12	2,230	0.04	90	0.00
All pupils	156,170	2.10	25,880	0.35	11,840	0.16	810	0.01

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Includes city technology colleges and academies (including all-through academies).
[3] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools. Excludes general hospital schools.
[4] Pupils may be counted more than once if they were registered at more than one school or moved schools during the school year.
[5] Pupils' SEN status at the time of their most recent fixed period or permanent exclusion.
[6] The number of excluded pupils by SEN stage expressed as a percentage of the number (headcount) of all pupils (excluding dually registered pupils) with the same SEN stage in January each year.

Note:
Totals may not appear to equal the sum of component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
School Census

Specialist Schools and Academies Trust: Finance

Mr Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much his Department has *(a)* paid out and *(b)* granted to the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust in (i) 2009-10 and (ii) 2010-11; what the planned expenditure is for 2011-12; and if he will make a statement. [20095]

Mr Gibb: The Department paid a total of £35,893,936 to the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) in 2009-10 of which £20,378,819 was paid under contracts won by SSAT in open competition and £15,515,117 was grant.

The Department is due to pay a total of £29,747,500 to SSAT in 2010-11 of which £15,411,282 is due to be paid under contracts won by SSAT in open competition and £14,336,218 is grant.

The Department currently has no plans to grant fund SSAT in 2011-12 but SSAT would, of course, be free to bid for any contracts which the Department advertised in future.

Students: Finance

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether academic institutions will be required to assess household income when determining the students they plan to fund through the Discretionary Learner Support Fund in the 2011-12 academic year. [26970]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* Decisions regarding the new discretionary fund will be made locally, enabling schools, colleges and training providers to target support at those young people in greatest need.

In finalising the arrangements for the enhanced discretionary learner support fund, the Department will consult with schools, colleges and training organisations, including on what guidance is required to administer the fund effectively.

Teresa Pearce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has for unspent funds in discretionary learner support funds at the end of academic year 2011-12. [27464]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* We will work with representatives of schools, colleges and training providers to finalise the arrangements for the enhanced fund, including mechanisms for dealing with any unspent funding. Currently the Young People's Learning Agency has a process to redistribute unused discretionary learner support funds from providers who indicate that they will not use all their allocation to providers who indicate they need more support.

Teresa Pearce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what age limits will be placed on access to student financial support for the discretionary learner support fund by his Department for the academic year 2011-12. [27465]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* Currently young people over compulsory school age and under the age of 19 can access discretionary learner support funds operated by the Department for Education. We have no plans to change this when we introduce the enhanced fund. Adults aged 19 and over are currently able to access discretionary learner funds operated by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills.

Teresa Pearce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the effects on student choice in applying to higher education institutions of differing levels of financial assistance being available via the discretionary learner support fund at further education institutions. [27466]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* The aim of the enhanced discretionary funding is for schools, colleges and training providers to be able to target those young people who need the support to enable them to remain in education post-16. In addition, the introduction of the new National Scholarship programme, linked to the pupil premium, will also help to widen access to higher education for young people from the poorest backgrounds. We do not anticipate any impact on student choice in applying to higher education from the introduction of the enhanced discretionary funding.

Teresa Pearce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether private training providers will be eligible for Government funding to administer their own discretionary learner support funds in academic year 2011-12. [27467]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 29 November]:* As under current arrangements, the enhanced discretionary learner support funds for young people aged 16 to 18 will be available to support students studying YPLA-funded courses in colleges, sixth form colleges, school sixth forms, private training providers and higher education institutions.

Sure Start Programme: Finance

Ben Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what funding he expects to provide for Sure Start during the spending review period. [20832]

Sarah Teather: Sure Start will be maintained in cash terms over the next spending review period, including investment in health visitors.

Vocational Guidance

Ian Mearns: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what mechanism he plans to establish to ensure that common professional standards for careers and Connexions services are maintained in each local authority during the comprehensive spending review period. [24070]

Mr Gibb: We will establish an all-age careers service, open to all young people and adults through a range of channels, including a website, helpline and face-to-face support. We will develop the detail of the new service in discussion with local authorities, schools and the careers sector.

The Government have recently welcomed the report of the Careers Profession Taskforce, which makes 14 recommendations designed to uphold common professional standards and ethics. We are working with members of the taskforce and of the Careers Profession Alliance to support implementation of the recommendations, and will be asking for a report on progress in March 2011 and in March 2012.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Developing Countries: Sexuality

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent steps his Department has taken to reduce the incidence of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in developing countries. [29316]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) works with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) on UK human rights policy overseas, including lobbying against prejudice and persecution of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

In July 2010, the Government Equalities Office (GEO) published "Working for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality", a programme of work that sets out how the UK will continue to push towards LGBT equality at home and abroad. The Government's work abroad includes examining the human rights records of other countries through the UN-led universal periodic review and working through the Commonwealth to engage with the 42 Commonwealth countries that retain homophobic legislation. GEO continue to work with DFID to develop the action plan abroad, which seeks the decriminalisation of homosexuality.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan: Armed Forces

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many recruits there were to the Afghan National Army in each month of 2009 and 2010; [28237]

(2) how many people left the Afghan National Army in each month of 2009 and 2010. [28238]

Dr Fox *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* We are making excellent progress on growing the Afghan National Security Forces and are currently ahead of schedule for meeting the target of 171,600 Afghan National Army by the end of 2011.

Recruitment and retention are matters for the Government of Afghanistan but we will continue to work closely with them to help build their capacity and capability.

Afghanistan: Peacekeeping Operations

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what regulations govern his Department's relationship with the private security contractors it employs in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [28333]

Dr Fox: The Ministry of Defence does not contract directly with private military security companies in Afghanistan.

Colchester Garrison

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has plans to declare any part of the Middlewick Ranges, Colchester Garrison, surplus to military requirements. [29817]

Mr Robathan: Middlewick Ranges is a fully operational firing range. There are currently no plans to declare any part of Middlewick Ranges surplus to military requirements.

However, as outlined in the Defence Estates Strategy 2006 (In Trust and On Trust), Ministry of Defence holdings of training facilities are constantly kept under review to take account of changing requirements.

Departmental Land

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how long on average it took to complete a land quality assessment on part of the defence estate in the latest period for which figures are available. [29589]

Peter Luff: Land quality assessment (LQA) is a phased process but not every phase will be required in all cases. For that reason it would be misleading to provide an average figure.

Each LQA is site and situation specific and the time taken will be dependent upon such factors as the size and nature of the site in question, and the availability of information. That said, Phase One LQA typically takes around three months. The subsequent site investigation (Phase Two LQA) can take from 11 to 30 weeks. Remediation may take some years to complete.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working within his private office in each of the last five years. [28560]

Dr Fox: The budgetary area which includes the Secretary of State for Defence's private office paid the following sums in overtime over the period in question.

Financial year	*£*
2005-06	53,845.14
2006-07	62,550.63
2007-08	77,992.40
2008-09	119,630.38
2009-10	76,622.69
2010-11 (April to October)	59,865.80

Not all of the staff who were paid overtime by this area, in this period, would have worked directly in the Private Office. Numbers claiming in each year vary but in some years up to a dozen people have claimed overtime against this budgetary area.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Matthew Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence to which local newspapers his Department had a subscription between May 2006 and May 2010; on what date each such subscription started; and what the cost to the public purse was of such subscriptions. [24429]

Mr Robathan: The Ministry of Defence has an enabling contract with a supplier to provide newspapers and copyrate magazines at a discounted rate to units within the London area which came into force on 1 March 2002. MOD is in the process of re-tendering this contract with a view to reducing the cost.

MOD units outside London may purchase newspapers under local arrangements. Information on the titles ordered and expenditure under these local arrangements is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Overall expenditure under the enabling contract for the supply of copyrate magazines, national and regional newspapers for units within the London area for the period May 2006 to May 2010, and also for June 2010 to date, is as follows:

	£
May 2006-April 2007	54,084.96
May 2007-April 2008	61,506.52
May 2008-April 2009	69,648.61
May 2009-May 2010	90,370.07
June 2010-November 2010	25,545.91

No central record is kept of the individual titles ordered under the contract, and this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28140]

Mr Robathan: Within the Ministry of Defence, the Directorate of Media and Communications provides press cuttings to those central sections of the Department requiring sight of the coverage given to defence issues in the local, national and international media. In order to properly communicate defence policy and the work of our armed forces and civilian personnel, it is vital that the Department gains a rapid awareness of such coverage.

The provision of a press cuttings service is regularly reviewed to ensure the best value for money, both in terms of the number of recipients and the search terms used. These are kept to a minimum consistent with maintaining the appropriate level of awareness.

The cost of press cuttings services purchased by the MOD press office is shown as follows. Figures given indicate the costs for each complete financial year over the period for which records are held and do not account for inflation.

FY	*Cost of press cuttings services (£000)*
2009-10	144
2008-09	127
2007-08	182
2006-07	[1]166
2005-06	112
2004-05	111

[1] No figure is held for the month of April 2006. Total shown is for the remaining 11 months.

Note:

The figures given above exclude VAT and Newspaper Licensing Authority fees.

France: Military Alliances

Tessa Munt: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to consult hon. Members during the ratification process for the proposed UK-France Treaty on nuclear weapons co-operation. [28762]

Dr Fox: Following the UK-France summit on 2 November 2010 and the signing of the UK-France Treaty relating to Joint Hydrodynamics Facilities to maintain the safety and reliability of our existing nuclear weapons stockpile, I responded to detailed questions from hon. Members of the House on the purpose, scope, and implications of the Treaty. The Treaty was laid before Parliament on 10 November 2010, with an accompanying Explanatory Memorandum setting out the Government's position. It was laid under the Ponsonby rule which allows hon. Members of Parliament in both Houses 21 sitting days to consider the Treaty and ensures that they have a full opportunity to raise any questions or request a debate on the Treaty in the usual way before ratification.

USA: Cluster Munitions

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department took to inform both Houses of discussions with officials of *(a)* the US Administration and *(b)* other governments relevant to the Cluster Munitions (Prohibition) Bill (i) before and (ii) during the passage of the Bill; and if he will make a statement. [29402]

Dr Fox: This is a matter for the previous government.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has issued any authorisation specified under the visiting forces section of the Cluster Munitions Prohibition Act 2009 to bring cluster munitions into *(a)* the UK, *(b)* UK overseas territories and *(c)* UK and overseas territorial waters; if he will make it his policy to submit all future such requests for authorisation to the House for scrutiny; and if he will make a statement. [29403]

Dr Fox: No. Neither I nor any other Secretary of State in this Government has issued any authorisation under Article 8 of the Act.

Article 8 does not require such requests to be scrutinised by Parliament. However, in the event of a future request, we would consider on a case-by-case basis how best we can keep Parliament informed within the constraints of classification and operational planning.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Landfill

17. **David Mowat:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill sites. [29454]

Richard Benyon: Our long-term goal is a zero waste economy: preventing waste as far as possible, and treating waste that is produced as a valuable resource. Landfill should be the last resort.

The amount of waste we are sending to landfill is falling rapidly and we are currently conducting a comprehensive review of the country's waste policy that will set out how we go further.

Ancient Woodland: Protection

19. **Tom Blenkinsop:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for future funding for the protection of ancient woodland and forests. [29456]

Mr Paice: All woodland is protected through the control of tree felling under the Forestry Act, the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and the planning system.

Woodland owners other than the state are eligible for a range of grants which are being maintained over the spending review period.

Insurance Premiums: Flooding

20. **Lisa Nandy:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects of proposed changes to her Department's flood defence budget on the level of premiums for homes at risk from flooding. [29457]

Richard Benyon: DEFRA is working closely with the insurance industry to maximise the availability of flood insurance cover. We are consulting on changes to the way Government funding is allocated to flood and coastal erosion risk management projects. This will help safeguard insurance terms by encouraging increased investment beyond levels the national taxpayer alone can afford.

Waste Review

21. **Joan Ruddock:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to publish the findings of her Department's waste review. [29458]

Richard Benyon: In line with our departmental business plan, the findings of the waste review will be published in May 2011.

Commons Fisheries Policy

22. **Mark Reckless:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had on the reform of the common fisheries policy; and if she will make a statement. [29459]

Richard Benyon: As UK Fisheries Minister, I have had discussions with a range of organisations and people about Common Fisheries Policy reform. These include discussions with the EU Fisheries Commissioner, and other member state Ministers, during November's EU Fisheries Council. I have met representatives of the fishing industry both large scale, and under 10 metre, fleets, MEPs, and non-governmental organisations. I plan to have further discussions in pressing our case for radical reform of the CFP.

Food Labelling

23. **Mr Llwyd:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had on mandatory country of origin labelling; and if she will make a statement. [29460]

Mr Paice: The UK has been actively involved in the EU negotiations on a new regulation for food labelling. The text for the regulation, on which political agreement was reached at the Health Council earlier this week, includes a mandatory requirement for origin labelling of fresh and frozen meat. It also requires a declaration of ingredient origin when origin claims are made. While there will be further discussion on the details of this requirement, the text is a positive move towards improving food labelling and complements the recent work that UK industry is doing to improve origin information for the benefit of UK consumers.

Common Agricultural Policy

24. **Mr Bone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will bring forward a contingency plan to support UK farming in the event that the common agricultural policy is discontinued. [29461]

Mrs Spelman: I do not anticipate the CAP being discontinued in the next Financial Perspective (2014-20), but it should be reformed to enable farmers to adapt to the future. Agriculture needs to move away from permanent subsidy by continuing the market orientation of the industry. As the Prime Minister has made clear, the EU Budget also needs to reflect the budgetary constraints on European economies. The CAP budget must therefore fall significantly over the next Financial Perspective.

Rural Development: England

Duncan Hames: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for the future administration of the socio-economic elements of the rural development programme for England. [29462]

Mr Paice: The ongoing delivery functions of the socio-economic elements for the Rural Development Programme for England 2007-13, which are currently managed by the Regional Development Agencies, will be transferred into DEFRA.

Departmental Procurement

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 24 June 2010, *Official Report*, column 291W, what assessment she has made of progress in increasing the proportion of food procured by Government Departments from farm assured sources; and what statistical evidence informed that assessment. [29283]

Mr Paice: The Government have made a commitment to source food, subject to no overall increase in costs, meeting British or equivalent standards of production. In addition, we are developing Government Buying Standards for food and catering. We are proposing that these standards, which are mandatory for central Departments, include a range of sustainability and nutrition criteria. Our timetable to introduce these standards is March 2011 and Departments will report in June 2011 on the amount of food procured during the year April 2010 to March 2011 that meets these Government Buying Standards.

EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Sheryll Murray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the outcome was of the most recent meeting of the Fisheries Council; and which UK Ministers attended. [28553]

Richard Benyon: As the Minister for Natural Environment and Fisheries, I led the UK Fisheries delegation at the Council meeting on 29 November. I was accompanied by the Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for South East Cambridgeshire (Mr Paice) and the Minister for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland (Michelle Gildernew), on both days. Due to adverse weather conditions the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment for the Scottish Government (Richard Lochhead) was delayed for Council negotiations, but he was present for discussions with the Commission on the following day.

Unanimous agreement was reached on a range of catch limits and associated controls for certain deep sea species for 2011 and 2012, thus reflecting the vulnerable condition of many of the stocks concerned.

The EU Commission updated member states on the first round of discussions with Norway over fishing opportunities for 2011. The UK took the opportunity to emphasise its priorities for the ongoing negotiations, including an expansion of the existing catch quota regime, incorporating other stocks in addition to North sea cod, and stressing the importance of reaching a balanced agreement with Coastal States on the future management of the North East Atlantic mackerel stock.

The Commission also indicated that it would discuss with the European Parliament and member states how to resolve the current impasse on the development of long-term management plans post-Lisbon treaty.

Public Bodies: Public Finance

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what estimate she has made of the potential saving to the public purse of the abolition of the Environment Protection Advisory Committees in each of the next five years; [28989]

(2) what estimate she has made of the potential saving to the public purse of the abolition of the Home Grown Timber Advisory Committee in each of the next five years; [28990]

(3) what estimate she has made of the potential saving to the public purse of the abolition of the Regional Advisory Committees established under the Forestry Act 1967 in each of the next five years; [28991]

(4) what estimate she has made of the potential saving to the public purse of the abolition of the regional and local Fisheries Advisory Committees in each of the next five years; [28992]

(5) what estimate she has made of the potential saving to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Agricultural Land Tribunals in each of the next five years; [28993]

(6) what estimate she has made of the potential saving to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board in each of the next five years; [28994]

(7) what estimate she has made of the potential saving to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in each of the next five years; [28995]

(8) what estimate she has made of the potential saving to the public purse of the reconstitution of the British Waterways Board in each of the next five years; [28996]

(9) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the British Wool Marketing Board in each of the next five years; [28997]

(10) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Broads Authority in each of the next five years; [28998]

(11) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Drinking Water Inspectorate in each of the next five years; [28999]

(12) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Consumer Council for Water in each of the next five years; [29001]

(13) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Environment Agency in each of the next five years; [29002]

(14) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Forestry Commissioners in each of the next five years; [29003]

(15) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee in each of the next five years; [29004]

(16) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Marine Management Organisation in each of the next five years; [29005]

(17) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the National Park Authorities in each of the next five years; [29006]

(18) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of Natural England in each of the next five years; [29007]

(19) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of regional flood and coastal committees in each of the next five years; [29008]

(20) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Veterinary Products Committee in each of the next five years; [29009]

(21) what estimate she has made of the potential savings to the public purse of the reconstitution of the Water Services Regulation Authority in each of the next five years. [29010]

Richard Benyon: The proposed changes to DEFRA's public bodies will contribute modest savings. The main benefits of the Public Bodies Reform Bill proposals are to increase transparency and accountability of public bodies. Where bodies are to be reconstituted as expert committees, we do not envisage that significant financial savings will be generated.

The 2011-12 budgets for the new committees have not yet been finalised but these will reflect the cuts agreed in the Government's spending review. The time scale for implementing the decisions announced on 14 October will vary for each body, and depend on legislative or administrative processes.

The saving and proposals for each body are detailed in the following table:

Public body	
[1578] Environment Protection Advisory Committees	There are seven regional committees in England. Each has a Chair, paid approximately £18,000 per annum. We propose abolishing these statutory advisory committees (in England only) and using the resources to create a new non-statutory local advisory framework with more flexible community and civil society engagement.
[1579] Home Grown Timber Advisory Committee	Negligible—this body will be abolished as it no longer meets.
[1580] The Regional Advisory Committees established under the Forestry Act 1967	Before an order is laid to abolish the Regional Advisory Committees, a new framework will be designed in close consultation with interested parties including the existing committees, to ensure the benefits of the current approach are not lost in transition.
[1581] The regional and local Fisheries Advisory Committees	There are seven regional committees in England and each has a chair paid approximately £18,000 per annum. We propose abolishing these statutory advisory committees (in England only) and using the resources to create a new non-statutory local advisory framework with more flexible community and civil society engagement.
[1582] The Agricultural Land Tribunals	Negligible—scope to transfer jurisdiction of this tribunal into the Ministry of Justice's tribunal is currently being considered.
[1583] The Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board	Negligible—we are initiating debate with industry about the future of the industry levy funded body, including non-public sector options.
[1584] The Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	Negligible—there are no changes planned for the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Public body	
[1585] The British Waterways Board	Negligible — it is the intention that this body would be abolished as a public corporation in England and Wales and replaced with the creation of a new waterways charity — similar to a National Trust for the waterways. This will require continuing Government investment for the immediate future
[1586] The British Wool Marketing Board (BWMB)	None — The BWMB is a producer-run organisation and is entirely funded through its members. However, this body is being retained on grounds of performing a technical function which should remain independent of the Government
[1587] The Broads Authority	The current consultation on governance arrangements in the National Park and Broads Authorities will lead to a list of actions being produced for each Authority by the end of March 2011. Only at that stage will it be possible to estimate the cost or savings associated with those changes.
[1588] The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI)	None — it is not proposed to abolish or reconstitute the Drinking Water Inspectorate. The proposal is to implement a charging scheme which will enable the DWI to recover the cost of regulatory work, except enforcement, undertaken on behalf of the water industry. These costs will be passed on to water company customers in water bills (estimated as 15 pence on the average annual water bill), which will make a saving to the public purse of £1.9 million per year.
[1589] The Consumer Council for Water	None — the Consumer Council for Water's expenditure requirements are covered by licence fees paid for by water companies. There is no cost to the public purse.
[1590] The Environment Agency	The Environment Agency will be retained and substantially reformed through structural, process and cultural change to become a more efficient and customer-focused organisation within spending review 2010 allocations (not yet announced). Only at that stage will it be possible to estimate the cost or savings associated with those changes.
[1591] The Forestry Commissioners	The Forestry Commissioners will be retained and substantially reformed. Details of reform to the public forest estate, managed by the Forestry Commissioners, will be set out early in the new year. Only at that stage will it be possible to estimate the cost or savings associated with those changes.
[1592] The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)	The current structure of the JNCC is considered to be the most efficient and effective way of delivering the independent advice required to allow the four UK conservation bodies — Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Countryside Council for Wales and the Northern Ireland Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside — to discharge their statutory responsibilities for nature conservation across the UK as a whole and internationally. JNCC will in future focus more closely on its core functions in order to deliver budget efficiencies.
[1593] The Marine Management Organisation	None — there are no plans to abolish this body.
[1594] The National Park Authorities	The current consultation on governance arrangements in the National Park and Broads Authorities will lead to a list of actions being produced for each Authority by the end of March 2011. Only at that stage will it be possible to estimate the cost or savings associated with those changes.
[1595] Natural England	Natural England will be substantially reformed. DEFRA is working with Natural England on structural, process and cultural change to transform it into a leaner, more efficient front line delivery body focused strongly on the Government's ambitions for the environment and the green economy within spending review 2010 allocations (not yet announced). Only at that stage will it be possible to estimate the cost or savings associated with those changes.
[1596] Regional Flood and Coastal Committees	None — no changes are proposed.
[1597] Veterinary Products Committee	None — This body is being retained on grounds of performing a technical function which should remain independent of Government.
[1598] The Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat)	None — Ofwat's expenditure requirements are covered by licence fees recovered from the companies they regulate and as such there is no cost to the public purse.

Note:
The word 'negligible' in the table refers to cases where potential savings to the public purse are estimated to be negligible. 'None' refers to instances where no savings are envisaged.

UK Woodland Assurance Standard

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of the area of privately-owned forest which is managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard. [28986]

Mr Paice: The area of woodland that is independently certified in England, (excluding the area managed by the Forestry Commission) is 144,000 ha. This area is managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard which is used as the basis for independent certification. The majority of this is private woodland, but the figure also includes woods owned by local authorities and charitable bodies such as the Woodland Trust and National Trust. There may also be a small area of woodland which is managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard but is not certified.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Higher Education: Participation

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the likely socio-economic effects on young people from low-income families of *(a)* increasing tuition fees, *(b)* cancelling the education maintenance allowance scheme and *(c)* closing Aimhigher. [28546]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The Government have been very clear about the importance of widening participation and improving fair access in higher education—all those with the ability should have access to higher education irrespective of family income.

The interim equality impact assessment of the reforms to higher education funding and student finance was published on 29 November 2010:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/higher-education/docs/i/10-1310-interim-equality-impact-assessment-he-funding-and-student-finance.pdf

The Department commissioned research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) which explored how changes in fees, grants and loans impact on participation. That research, which analysed the impact of the 2006-07 HE finance reforms, indicates that while a £1,000 increase in fees results in a 4.4ppt decrease in university participation, this is more than offset by the increases resulting from provision of loans and grants (3.2ppt and 2.1ppt increases).

The interim EQIA does not include an assessment of the full new package of proposals that includes ending Aimhigher; introducing new access arrangements for universities wishing to charge over £6,000; a new £150 million National Scholarship Programme targeted on students from disadvantaged backgrounds; and a new £2.5 billion pupil premium from April 2011. A full EQIA will be published in the coming months.

In reaching the decision to end the education maintenance allowance (EMA), the Government closely assessed the evaluation evidence and other research which indicated that EMA does not effectively target those young people who need financial support to enable them to participate in learning. The evidence suggested that around 90% of the young people who receive EMA would still have participated in learning if the scheme was not available. Data from the 2008/09 Family Resources Survey suggest that the removal of EMA will have a negligible impact on the number of children in poverty. From 2011/12, EMA will be replaced by an enhanced learner support fund that will be administered by schools and colleges themselves, targeting those young people who face a real financial barrier to participation.

Apprentices

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the number of organisations that have taken on apprentices since the publication of the 2009 Office of Government Commerce guidelines on Promoting Skills through Public Procurement. [29741]

Mr Hayes: Information to date for the 2009/10 academic year shows that so far 85,400 site-level employers have taken on an Apprentice. Specific information on the number of organisations who have taken on an Apprentice as a direct result of action taken through the formal public procurement process is not held centrally.

Apprentices: Graduates

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many apprenticeship positions suitable for graduates he expects to be created in each of the next five years as a result of the policies announced in his Department's paper, Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth. [29847]

Mr Hayes: This Department sets no specific targets for numbers of graduate apprentices. Apprenticeships are open to all suitably-qualified people aged 16 and over. I was pleased to be able to announce last month that total funding for adult apprenticeships will rise by up to £250 million during this Parliament, so that by 2014-15 up to 75,000 more places will be available than under the previous Administration. However, whilst graduates are eligible to take up employment as apprentices at any level, Government funding is not available to support their training.

Business: Government Assistance

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many grants made by his Department to small firms based in Reading West constituency under the *(a)* Small Firms Local Guarantee scheme and *(b)* Enterprise Finance Guarantee were of between (i) £1,000 and £5,000, (ii) £5,001 and £20,000, (iii) £20,001 and £50,000, (iv) £50,001 and £100,000, (v) £100,001 and £150,000, (vi) £150,001 and £200,000, (vii) £200,001 and £250,000, (viii) £250,001 and £500,000 and (ix) over £500,000 in each of the last five years. [29996]

Mr Prisk: The Small Firms Loan Guarantee (SFLG) and Enterprise Finance Guarantee (EFG) are loan guarantee scheme through which the Government encourages additional lending to viable small businesses by providing a Government guarantee to the lender. EFG was launched in January 2009 effectively replacing SFLG.

Between 2006/07 and 2008/09 there were 14 SFLG loans to businesses in Reading West with a value of £1.073 million. From 2009/10 to date 11 businesses in Reading West have been offered loans under EFG with a value of £725,000, of which 10 businesses have drawn down loan totalling £610,000. A full breakdown by each year follows:

Small Firms Loan Guarantee—SFLG

Loan value	Number of loans drawn	Value of loans drawn £000
2006/07		
£1,000 to £5,000	0	0
£5,001 to £20,000	1	12

Small Firms Loan Guarantee (SFLG)

Loan value	*Number of loans drawn*	*Value of loans drawn (£000)*
£20,001 to £50,000	3	89
£50,001 to £1.00,000	1	56
£100,001 to £150,000	0	0
£150,001 to £200,000	1	175
£200,001 to £250,000	0	0
£250,001 to £500,000	0	0
£500,001 to £1 million	0	0
Total	6	332
2007/08		
£1,000 to £5,000	0	0
£5,001 to £20,000	0	0
£20,001 to £50,000	3	95
£50,001 to £100,000	1	75
£100,001 to £150,000	0	0
£150,001 to £200,000	0	0
£200,001 to £250,000	1	250
£250,001 to £500,000	0	0
£500,001 to £1 million	0	0
Total	5	420
2008/09		
£1,000 to £5,000	0	0
£5,001 to £20,000	1	17
£20,001 to £50,000	0	0
£50,001 to £100,000	0	0
£100,001 to £150,000	0	0
£150,001 to £200,000	2	304
£200,001 to £250,000	0	0
£250,001 to £500,000	0	0
£500,001 to £1 million	0	0
Total	3	321

Enterprise Finance Guarantee (EFG)

Loan value	*Number of loan offered*	*Value of loans offered (£000)*	*Number of loans drawn*	*Value of loans drawn (£000)*
2009/10				
£1,000 to £5,000	0	0	0	0
£5,001 to £20,000	1	18	1	18
£20,001 to £50,000	4	143	4	143
£50,001 to £100,000	2	169	2	169
£100,001 to £150,000	1	150	1	150
£150,001 to £200,000	0	0	0	0
£200,001 to £250,000	0	0	0	0
£250,001 to £500,000	0	0	0	0
£500,001 to £1 million	0	0	0	0
Total	8	480	8	480
2010/11				
£1,000 to £5,000	0	0	0	0
£5,001 to £20,000	0	0	0	0
£20,001 to £50,000	1	30	1	30
£50,001 to £100,000	1	100	1	100
£100,001 to £150,000	1	115	0	0
£150,001 to £200,000	0	0	0	0
£200,001 to £250,000	0	0	0	0
£250,001 to £500,000	0	0	0	0
£500,001 to £1 million	0	0	0	0
Total	3	245	2	130

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28104]

Mr Davey: In the coalition agreement the Government made a commitment to promote small business procurement in the public sector, with an aspiration that 25% of Government contracts should be awarded to SMEs.

On 2 November the Minister for the Cabinet Office, the right hon. Member for Horsham (Mr Maude) announced a package of measures intended to make Government procurement easier for SMEs and voluntary sector organisations by simplifying the procurement process and making opportunities more accessible. These measures include the introduction of a simpler standardised pre-qualification questionnaire which is mandated across central Government from 1 December 2010; a LEAN study investigating red tape and causes of delay in the procurement process; and from March 2011 the Contracts Finder system—a free facility for small business to find public sector procurement, and sub contracting, opportunities in a single place online and free of charge.

The Government will be consulting further on facilitating voluntary sector access to public procurement. The Commissioning Green Paper to be published by the Cabinet Office shortly will aim to create a level playing field for charities, voluntary groups and social enterprises that wish to bid for public service contracts. The

Government have launched a forum on the No. 10 website for SMEs to give their views on public procurement from which we will be able to take further action.

Departmental Public Bodies

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the oral statement of 20 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 961, on the spending review, which 24 public bodies for which the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is responsible will be abolished. [29821]

Mr Davey: The 24 public bodies referred to in the oral statement of 20 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 949-65, will cease to exist in their current form but will not all be abolished. They include 19 bodies which it is proposed will no longer be non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), two bodies which will no longer be public corporations and six bodies which will be reduced to three through mergers.

The 19 bodies which will no longer be NDPBs are: Aircraft and Shipbuilding Industries Arbitration Tribunal; Competition Service; Consumer Focus (National Consumer Council); Copyright Tribunal; Design Council; Hearing Aid Council; NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts); eight Regional Development Agencies; SITPRO Ltd; Strategic Advisory Board for Intellectual Property; Union Modernisation Fund Supervisory Board; Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Advisory Body.

The bodies which will no longer be public corporations are British Nuclear Fuels Limited and British Shipbuilders.

The six bodies which will be merged resulting in three bodies are: Central Arbitration Committee and Certification Office; Competition Commission and Office of Fair Trading; Ofcom and Postcomm.

Football: World Cup

Graham Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much his Department spent on entertainment activities related to the 2010 FIFA World cup. [27367]

Mr Davey: The Department's Facilities Management Team had no expenditure on entertainment-related to the 2010 FIFA World cup.

Further Education

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what new freedoms further education colleges will benefit from in *(a)* 2011-12 and *(b)* 2012-13. [29824]

Mr Hayes: We are freeing colleges so that they can respond quickly and flexibly to the needs of learners and employers and their broader local community.

In 2011-12, we are streamlining the skills landscape so that there are fewer intermediaries with which colleges have to work: abolishing BECTA and the Qualifications, Curriculum and Development Agency, transferring the Learning Skills Improvement Service to the further education (FE) sector itself and transferring responsibility for dispensing 16 to 18 grants to FE colleges to the Skills Funding Agency from the Young People's Learning Agency so that they have a single contact point for funding and performance. We are further simplifying systems by creating a single adult skills budget, which will also rationalise data collection. Also, subject to the will of Parliament, we will remove a raft of statutory powers and duties, including the exemption of colleges judged "outstanding" by Ofsted to be inspected, unless their performance drops, and the removal of the requirement to seek approval from the chief executive of Skills Funding before borrowing.

By 2012-13, the Institute for Learning will be self-financing and the funding system further simplified through streamlined funding rates and a simpler funding formula.

Overseas Students

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the effect on further education colleges of the Government's proposal to restrict student visas to those studying at degree level. [29873]

Mr Hayes: The proposal is that, while tier 4 is to be largely restricted to degree-level courses and child students, highly trusted sponsors will be permitted to offer courses below degree level to adults. We know that the majority of further education colleges that recruit international students are highly trusted.

The UK Border Agency has just launched a consultation as part of its review of the student immigration system. Details can be found on the UKBA website

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/student-consult-online

My Department is working with UKBA on both the review and the consultation.

It is envisaged that an impact assessment will be undertaken as part of developing proposals following the results of the consultation.

Student Loans Company: Correspondence

Mr Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the average time taken was for the Student Loan Company to reply to a letter from *(a)* an hon. Member and *(b)* a member of the public in the last two years; and if he will make a statement. [28653]

Mr Willetts I will respond to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

In financial year 2009-10 it took the Student Loans Company on average 11 working days to reply to letters from Members of Parliament. In financial year 2010-11 it is taking the Company six working days on average to reply to Members of Parliament.

In financial year 2009-10 it took the Students Loans Company on average 10 working days to reply to letters from members of the public in relation to student finance account updates and general issues. In financial year 2010-11 it is taking the Company 12 working days on average to reply to members of the public.

Students: Fees and Charges

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what research his Department has commissioned on the number of students from families with children eligible for free school meals who would be deterred from taking up higher education courses charging annual tuition fees of *(a)* between £4,000 and £5,999, *(b)* between £6,000 and £7,999, *(c)* between £8,000 and £8,999 and *(d)* £9,000 or more; [29759]

(2) what studies his Department has commissioned on the potential effect of annual tuition fees of *(a)* £4,000, *(b)* £5,000, *(c)* £6,000, *(d)* £7,000, *(e)* £8,000 and *(f)* £9,000 on (i) the level of participation in higher education by students from families with gross income of less than £35,000, (ii) the number of applications by students from lower income families for courses of over three years duration and (iii) the number of students applying for a postgraduate certificate of education as a route into teaching as a profession. [29760]

Mr Willetts: The Department has commissioned two pieces of related research: one carried out by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) to support the Browne Review to explore how changes in fees, grants and loans impact on participation. That research, which analysed the 2006-07 HE finance reforms, indicated that while a £1,000 increase in fees results in a 4.4 ppt decrease in university participation, this is more than offset by the increases resulting from loans and grants package (3.2 ppt and 2.1 ppt increases). The other reviewed student support arrangements in other countries which also generally indicated there are no adverse impacts on participation of lower-income groups when an increase in tuition fees occurs alongside enhanced loan and grant provision.

The Government are committed to widening participation and improving fair access in higher education—ensuring that all those with the ability should have access to higher education irrespective of family income through the proposed package of reforms which include the introduction of new access arrangements for universities wishing to charge over £6,000; a new £150 million National Scholarship Programme targeted on students from disadvantaged backgrounds; and a more progressive system of graduate contributions.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what evidence he has received on the elasticity of demand of students from families with an annual income of *(a)* up to £15,000, *(b)* between £15,000 and £19,999, *(c)* between £20,000 and £24,999, *(d)* between £25,000 and £29,999, *(e)* between £30,000 and £34,999, *(f)* between £35,000 and £39,999, *(g)* between £40,000 and £44,999, *(h)* between £45,000 and £49,000 and *(i)* £50,000 and over for higher education subjects taking (i) three years until graduation, (ii) four years until graduation and (iii) four years or over until professional qualification, where annual tuition fees are charged of (A) £3,000, (B) £4,000, (C) £5,000, (D) £6,000, (E) £7,000, (F) £8,000 and (G) £9,000. [29761]

Mr Willetts: The Department commissioned research to support the Browne Review which explored how changes in fees, grants and loans impact on participation. That research, which analysed the 2006-07 HE finance reforms, indicated that:

> a £1,000 increase in fees results in a 4.4 ppt decrease in university participation, this is more than offset by the increases resulting from loans and grants package (3.2 ppt and 2.1 ppt increases).

The Government are committed to widening participation and improving fair access in higher education—ensuring that all those with the ability should have access to higher education irrespective of family income through the proposed package of reforms which include the introduction of new access arrangements for universities wishing to charge over £6,000; a new £150 million National Scholarship Programme targeted on students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Students: Loans

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which categories of part-time students will not be eligible for student loans under his proposals for higher education funding and student finance. [28799]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: Under our proposals and for the first time all part-time undergraduate students in England will be eligible for loans for their tuition costs provided: they are personally eligible in terms of residency; they do not already hold a qualification which is at an equivalent or higher level to the qualification for which they now intend to study; they are studying on a course which is designated for support; and they are studying at an intensity rate which is at least one-quarter of an equivalent full-time course. Currently 60,000 part-time students receive tuition grants. Under our proposals we estimate 175,000 part-timers may be eligible for loans. No eligible part-time students will have to pay for their tuition costs up front and they will not have to begin repaying until they are earning at least £21,000.

Vocational Guidance

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much funding his Department plans to allocate to the all-age careers service in *(a)* 2010-11, *(b)* 2011-12 and *(c)* 2012-13; and how many officials in his Department are working on this policy. [29819]

Mr Hayes: The all-age careers service will be operational from April 2012, although young people and adults will be able to start accessing new arrangements for careers guidance from September 2011.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has allocated £82.8 million in 2010-11 for careers guidance for adults, which will be provided by the Next Step careers service in that year. The Department for Education (DfE) has allocated £466.7 million to local authorities for the Connexions service in 2010-11, through the area-based grant. Resources are not allocated separately to 'universal' and 'targeted' activities within the Connexions budget, and the Department does not collect data on local authority spend in those areas. However, we estimate that, of the total budget for Connexions in 2010-11, around £200 million funds careers advice and guidance activity.

Following the spending review, BIS and DfE are working through the detail of their spending settlements and are unable at this stage to confirm the funding that will be available for the all-age service in 2011-12 or 2012-13. There are 12 officials within BIS and 16 officials within DfE currently working on this policy, although some of these officials have other areas of responsibility. There are also 10 individuals in the Skills Funding Agency who devote some of their time to the development of the all-age service.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 13 December 2010

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan: Aid Workers

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what reports he has received on effects of the recent deaths of two aid workers in Afghanistan on the work carried out by voluntary organisations operating in that country. [30101]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The work of voluntary organisations in Afghanistan is vital and we are deeply saddened at the recent deaths of two aid workers.

These losses are not expected to have a major impact on the work of non-government organisations (NGOs) in Afghanistan. Overall, the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO) reports that NGO security incidents are declining. There has been a 17% reduction in attacks on NGOs by armed opposition groups this quarter compared to the same quarter last year, while criminal incidents have fallen by 43% over the same period. However, the accessibility of some districts for national and international staff has declined.

All NGOs working in Afghanistan liaise with the ANSO. Staff at the British embassy in Kabul are in regular contact with the ANSO and share relevant security information with them. The UK Government supports the work of ANSO through its contributions to the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO).

Departmental Energy

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost was of *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas supplied to his Department's offices at 1 Palace Street in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [29672]

Mr Duncan: The cost of electricity and gas supplied to the Department for International Development's (DFID's) headquarters in London in each of the last 12 months is as follows. These figures include sections of the building that are let to Visit Britain.

Month	*Electricity (£)*	*Gas (£)*
2009		
November	25,007	4,235
December	25,015	7,255
2010		
January	26,006	6,800
February	25,809	7,441
March	28,634	6,347
April	25,256	3,008
May	25,207	3,425
June	26,491	2,607
July	27,242	1,534
August	25,860	1,738
September	26,097	1,743
October	27,302	3,780

Departmental Manpower

Heidi Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how many jobs advertised by his Department have specified training in an agricultural discipline in each of the last 10 years; [29408]

(2) how many staff with training in an agricultural discipline his Department has employed in each of the last 10 years. [29409]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) employs staff from a range of professional backgrounds, many of whom are likely to have agricultural related training. To determine the extent of agricultural related training among all the staff employed and the number of jobs requiring agricultural related training, in the last 10 years, would incur disproportionate cost.

However, DFID has two senior civil service positions and a group of professional livelihoods advisers who are required to have agricultural or rural development related training.

Developing Countries: Energy

Pauline Latham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with industry specialists on private sector solutions to energy infrastructure issues in developing countries. [29543]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: I meet regularly with a range of organisations to discuss private sector issues.

For more information relating to my meetings with outside interest groups please see the following:

http://www.dfid.gov.uk/About-DFID/Our-organisation1/Ministers/

Developing Countries: HIV Infection

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV. [29764]

Mr O'Brien: The Government are committed to a comprehensive approach to eliminating paediatric AIDS, and in particular by focusing on where we have a comparative advantage: primary prevention of HIV among women of child-bearing age, and prevention of unintended pregnancies among women living with HIV through our investments in family planning.

The Reproductive, Maternal and Newborn Health Business Plan, as the coalition Government's key mechanism to prioritise the health of women and babies, will support service delivery across the continuum of care needed to improve the health of women and girls, including the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. The Department for International Development (DFID) will continue to support efforts to increase access to affordable medicines, including anti-retroviral drugs and diagnostics, with a focus on pregnant women and newborns.

Government Building Stability Overseas Strategy Board

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development who represents his Department on the cross-Government Building Stability Overseas strategy board. [30210]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The strategic defence and security review (SDSR) mandates the Foreign Secretary and I as joint lead Ministers responsible for coordinating work on building stability overseas. The designated lead official from the Department for International Development (DFID) is the Director-General Country Programmes.

Kenya: Agriculture

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans his Department has to provide agricultural development assistance to Kenya. [30298]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: As part of a joint assistance strategy to Kenya, the Department for International Development (DFID), along with 16 other donors, has agreed to a division of labour to improve aid effectiveness. As a result, DFID is not planning to provide agricultural development assistance directly. DFID is, however, engaged in many related areas, such as food security, livestock insurance and pastoralist development. An example is the Hunger Safety Net Programme (£84 million 2007-2017), piloting innovative and secure ways of delivering cash to support 300,000 poor people by 2012. The small amounts of cash will allow people to buy food and diversify their livelihoods. Other support is planned for index-based livestock insurance, a drought management fund, 50,000 micro enterprises, and local community adaptation programmes.

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans his Department has to assist Kenya in meeting its commitments under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. [30299]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) has contributed £10 million to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), aiming to strengthen pan-African and regional institutions to support long-term investment plans and increase the proportion of national budgets for agriculture. Through CAADP, African governments are committed to raising agricultural productivity by at least 6% per year. Kenya has recently signed a CAADP agreement. DFID is not involved in direct assistance to Kenya on CAADP.

Kenya: Climate Change

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the effects of climate change on agriculture and food security in Kenya. [30300]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) has conducted a study on the economic impacts of climate change in Kenya, looking at a range of important sectors for the Kenyan economy, including agriculture and water. In some areas agricultural production is likely to improve through better rainfall and potential for irrigation. However, the overall impacts are likely to be negative, through increased occurrence of drought, flooding and changing patterns of land use.

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to assist farmers in Kenya to adapt to climate change. [30301]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) has contributed £37.5 million to the African Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF), which awards grants or loans for private sector projects in agri-business and financial sectors in rural Africa. A specific part of this fund, the Renewable Energy and Climate Technology Fund (REACT), aims specifically at supporting businesses that promote emissions mitigation and climate adaptation in East Africa. Further, DFID's Research and Evidence Division funds a number of research programmes supporting climate adaptation in Kenya, including pest management, and creating demand for new crop varieties and improved fertiliser blends. As part of the current review of all UK bilateral aid programmes, we are considering further what assistance we may be able to give Kenyan farmers to adapt to climate change in future.

Kenya: Food

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the food security situation in Kenya. [30297]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The food security situation in Kenya has improved since last year's drought, following favourable rains in late 2009 and 2010. The Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) reports that 1.2 million rural poor in the arid and semi-arid lands require assistance (down from 3.8 million in 2009). There is a risk that food security next year will deteriorate in eastern and south-eastern parts of the country due to uneven rains in March to June 2010 and predicted below-average rains in 2011 due to the impact of La Nina. Short-term food security has also improved among urban households, due in part to downward pressure on food prices, but the KFSSG still estimates that 3.5 million people in urban centres are food insecure.

Sri Lanka: Tourism

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his policy is on the provision of aid for the development of the tourism industry in Sri Lanka. [30167]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development's (DFID's) support to Sri Lanka now consists of emergency humanitarian assistance only, which does not extend to the tourism sector. DFID's direct aid programme closed in 2006 when Sri Lanka graduated to middle income status.

In 2008, responding to needs arising from the conflict, DFID committed £13.5 million of humanitarian funding to Sri Lanka. This support will end in March 2011. Further support will be provided over the next three years for landmine clearance, helping those still displaced to return home.

Western Sahara: Food

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assessment he has made of *(a)* the food security situation in Western Sahara and *(b)* the implication for food security in that country of the arrival of recent settlers; [30062]

(2) how much his Department spent on agricultural development in Western Sahara in each of the last five years; and what proportion of that expenditure was in respect of the *(a)* Saharawi population and *(b)* Moroccan settlers; [30063]

(3) how much his Department spent on emergency food aid in Western Sahara in each of the last five years; and what proportion of that expenditure was in respect of the *(a)* Saharawi population and *(b)* Moroccan settlers. [30064]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not have a bilateral aid programme in Western Sahara and has not provided direct emergency funds to the country in the last five years. We support Western Sahara through our share of the budget of the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). ECHO has provided €133 million in humanitarian aid to Western Sahara since it was established. DFID monitors all humanitarian situations on an ongoing basis.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Rape: Offences Against the Administration of Justice

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Attorney-General how many women have been prosecuted for perverting the course of justice following a false retraction of an allegation of rape in each year since 2005. [30381]

The Attorney-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) captures a wide range of information on the volume of specific offences that are charged and reach a first hearing in magistrates courts in its Compass Management Information System. However, these records do not include information about the gender of defendants to whom these offences relate or the particular circumstances of the charge.

The information requested is held on individual case files, but it could be retrieved only by locating and examining every relevant file in each CPS office in England and Wales and would incur a disproportionate cost.

[Official Report, 21 December 2010, Vol. 520, c. 7-8MC.]

PRIME MINISTER

Andrew Cook

John Mann: To ask the Prime Minister when he last *(a)* met, *(b)* spoke to and *(c)* corresponded with Andrew Cook. [29491]

The Prime Minister: Like other major donors to the Conservative party I have met Mr Cook from time to time, including since becoming Prime Minister. There is no record of him coming to Downing street.

Athletics

John Mann: To ask the Prime Minister what meetings he has had on the UK Athletics bid to host the 2017 world athletics championship in the last two months. [29482]

The Prime Minister: The Minister for Sport holds regular meetings with UK Athletics. Officials at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport are also in regular discussions with interested parties about a potential World Athletics Championships bid.

FIFA

John Mann: To ask the Prime Minister which members of the FIFA Executive Committee he has met in the course of his official duties since his appointment; and what undertaking each gave him on support for the Football Association's bid to host the 2018 FIFA World Cup. [30412]

The Prime Minister: I met Sepp Blatter in Downing street on 13 October 2010. I have spoken to a wide range of members of the FIFA Executive Committee. Notably I travelled to Zurich on Tuesday 30 November and again on Wednesday 1 December where I had meetings with most members of the Executive Committee to press support for the England bid.

Transfer of Questions

Ian Austin: To ask the Prime Minister for what reason question 28072, on discussions between the Prime Minister and the Mayor of London, was transferred for answer by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. [30524]

The Prime Minister: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has responsibility for this matter.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what steps she has taken since her appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within her responsibility. [28366]

Lynne Featherstone: The Government Equalities Office (GEO) has taken a number of steps to ensure expenditure on conferences is kept to a minimum, including:

Eliminating catering costs (when possible)

Using in-house facilities or partner organisations to host events (when appropriate)

Managing the delivery of events in-house, rather than using an external agency.

Departmental Equality

John McDonnell: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what steps the Government plans to take to ensure that *(a)* statutory duties in respect to race equality are observed and *(b)* equality impact assessments are prepared by each (i) Government department, (ii) local authority and (iii) other public body considering budgetary reductions. [29249]

Lynne Featherstone: In carrying out their functions all listed public bodies and those discharging public functions must have due regard to the matters specified in section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976.

Public bodies are legally required to assess the effect, or likely effect, of their policies on people of different races. This can be done in several ways of which formal equality impact assessments, although a good approach, are only one method.

Throughout the spending review process the Government Equalities Office (GEO) has been in contact with spending teams and senior policy owners to assist them to comply with the duties. Departments have various procedures in place to ensure equality is appropriately assessed and the GEO will continue to work closely with them to make sure equality is at the forefront of action to reduce the deficit fairly.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is responsible for enforcing equality legislation including the equality duties on all bodies that are subject to them.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Energy Supply

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was of *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas supplied to his Department's offices at 11 Millbank in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [29671]

Mr Swire: Monthly figures are unavailable as the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) is billed on a quarterly basis for its premises at 11 Millbank. The quarterly figures are as follows:

	£
Quarter period 1 October 2009 to 31 December 2009	
Gas	2,108.05
Electricity	8,012.04
Quarter period 1 January 2010 to 31 March 2010	
Gas	3,116.10
Electricity	5,848.69

My Department is awaiting bills covering 1 April 2010 onwards.

WALES

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what her Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30023]

Mr David Jones: I refer the hon. Member to my reply given to him on 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 1W.

SCOTLAND

Housing Associations: Lanarkshire

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assessment he has made of the current member of vacant housing association tenanted homes with *(a)* one bedroom and *(b)* two bedrooms in (i) South Lanarkshire and (ii) Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency. [30128]

David Mundell: This information is not held by the Scotland Office.

Multi-occupancy Lets: Lanarkshire

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what his most recent estimate is of the number of multi-occupancy lets by tenure in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency. [30129]

David Mundell: This information is not held by the Scotland Office.

Private Rented Housing: Lanarkshire

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what estimate he has made of the number of vacant private rented homes with *(a)* one bedroom and *(b)* two bedrooms in (i) South Lanarkshire and (ii) Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency where the rental is in the bottom 30 per cent. of local market values. [30131]

David Mundell: This information is not held by the Scotland Office.

Scottish Parliament: Elections

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether his Department has undertaken user-testing of the ballot papers for the elections to the Scottish Parliament in 2011. [30091]

David Mundell: The ballot papers for the 2011 Scottish Parliament election take account of the recommendations made by Ron Gould in his report on the May 2007 elections and the views expressed by voters who took part in the research undertaken by Quadrant Consultants on behalf of the Scotland Office during May and June 2008. They have been designed in accordance with the Electoral Commission's guidance on ballot paper design contained in 'Making your mark: Good practice for designing voter materials: guidance for government policy-makers'.

Social Rented Housing: Lanarkshire

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what estimate he has made of the number of vacant local authority tenanted homes with *(a)* one bedroom and *(b)* two bedrooms in (i) South Lanarkshire and (ii) Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency. [30130]

David Mundell: This information is not held by the Scotland Office.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Electoral Register

Mr Crausby: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he plans to take to increase the number of people who complete and return electoral registration forms. [29404]

Mr Harper: Responsibility for registering electors lies with individual electoral registration officers (EROs) based within local authorities. Each ERO is under a duty to take all steps that are necessary to maintain their registers.

The Electoral Commission provides guidance to EROs in undertaking electoral registration, and sets and monitors performance standards for EROs. As part of this monitoring role, the Electoral Commission recently published its second assessment of 'The Performance Standards for Electoral Registration Officers in Great Britain (March 2010)'.

On 15 September the Government announced their intention to speed up the implementation of individual electoral registration (IER) so that it comes into force in 2014. IER will involve the collection of identifying information from individual electors.

To complement the move to IER the Government intend to test data matching schemes during 2011 with the aim of identifying eligible electors who are not on the electoral register. Participating EROs will be able to compare the electoral register against other public databases and find people missing from the register. If these test schemes are successful the Government will consider rolling out data matching nationally as a means of encouraging electoral registration.

Electoral Register: North West

Mr Crausby: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Greater Manchester did not publish a new electoral roll on 1 December 2010. [29400]

Mr Harper: This information is not collected centrally.

Section 13 (1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 provides that a revised register of electors must be published by 1 December each year at the conclusion of the annual canvass. If, however, there has been an election during the canvass period, electoral registration officers are permitted to delay publication of the revised register until 1 February.

Members

Gavin Shuker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what activities will constitute serious wrongdoing under his legislative proposals to provide for the recall of hon. Members; [29947]

(2) what progress he has made on bringing forward legislative proposals to provide for the recall of hon. Members. [29948]

Mr Harper: The Government are committed to bringing forward legislation to introduce a power to recall Members of Parliament. We are currently considering what would be the fairest, most appropriate and robust procedure.

Members: Correspondence

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to reply to the letter of 15 November 2010 from the right hon. Member for Cynon Valley on tuition fees. [30382]

The Deputy Prime Minister: A reply was sent on 13 December 2010.

DEFENCE

Cyber-attacks

18. **James Morris:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent steps his Department has taken to reduce the risk of cyber-attacks on the defence estate; and if he will make a statement. [29894]

Nick Harvey: As we set out in the Strategic Defence and Security Review, we attach a high priority to the cyber-defence of our systems. This Government placed a renewed focus on this threat. We have recognised attacks through cyberspace as a Tier 1 risk to our national security. The Government have put in place an additional £650 million transformative national programme to enhance our protection in cyber space.

There are technical and procedural measures in place to protect the Ministry of Defence systems from cyber-attack, and to ensure we can mitigate the impact of those attacks.

You will understand if I do not comment further on the detail of those measures—I do not wish to provide information which could be exploited by a potential attacker.

Afghanistan: Peacekeeping Operations

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what arrangements his Department has made to ensure that Christmas cards and gifts reach British troops serving in Afghanistan in time for Christmas; [30194]

(2) what proportion of Christmas cards and gifts sent to British troops in Afghanistan he expects to reach the troops in time for Christmas. [30195]

Mr Robathan: The last date that families could post mail to be delivered to Afghanistan by Christmas was 3 December 2010; this date was widely publicised by the

Royal Mail and British Forces Post Office. Every effort is being made to ensure that mail is delivered promptly to members of the armed forces serving in Afghanistan. To ensure that the mail is delivered on time, additional staff have been employed at the BFPO sorting depot and if required, additional flights will also be chartered to supplement the regular air bridge to Afghanistan. Once in theatre, the mail is delivered to personnel through local arrangements. It may, however, be necessary to hold the mail for those who are deployed in remote Forward Operating Bases until they return to a larger base with the necessary mail facilities.

Armed Forces: Blood

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has considered the merits of introducing in the armed forces pathogen reduction technology as an option for combating known and unknown pathogens. [29303]

Mr Robathan: The surgeon general has received advice that current pathogen inactivation (PI) technology is not suitable for use in deployed UK operational facilities. He will continue to monitor developments in this area.

The Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO), a UK independent non-departmental public body run by the Department of Health, performed a risk assessment of strategies for the reduction of risk of bacterial contamination of platelets in 2009. The committee concluded at its meeting on 27 January 2010 that PI of platelets should not be implemented at this particular time, due to uncertainties around patient safety, increased donor exposure and efficacy of PI platelets. The situation will continue to be monitored by the secretariat.

The majority of the blood held and used in-theatre by the Defence Medical Services and used by the armed forces in the UK is supplied by NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) Service.

Armed Forces: Christmas

Caroline Dinenage: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements his Department has made for the annual Armed Forces Christmas Dinner in 2010. [28805]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 9 December 2010]*: There is no such event as an armed forces Christmas dinner.

Armed Forces: Health Services

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish the data used to determine his Department's funding allocation for healthcare to service personnel in each of the next four years. [29991]

Mr Robathan: Funding for the treatment of ill and injured personnel has been, and will continue to be, made available to match clinical requirements. Ministry of Defence-funded healthcare extends across a wide international network, including local unit-based primary care provision in the UK and overseas; regional rehabilitation and mental health units; and staff and facilities on deployed operations. Many of the costs are disaggregated and embedded in the budgets of individual military units and overall operational budgets. Owing to the number of different budgets to which costs would be attributable, any detailed analysis of healthcare funding data would incur disproportionate costs.

Armed Forces: Mental Health

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much funding his Department plans to allocate to research on mental health in respect of *(a)* serving personnel and *(b)* veterans in each of the next four years. [29990]

Mr Robathan: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 222W, to the right hon. Member for East Renfrewshire (Mr Murphy).

Defence: Scotland

Jim McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the likely effects of changes in his Department's spending on businesses in the private sector in Scotland. [29875]

Dr Fox: The Strategic Defence and Security Review changes were needed to allow our armed forces to meet the challenges of the future. The industrial implications of these changes were given careful consideration. The Ministry of Defence is now in commercial negotiations with our main suppliers as part of implementing the SDSR. It is too soon to judge the effect of these changes on industry in Scotland or elsewhere in the UK.

Departmental Assets

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his most recent estimate is of the monetary value of those of his Department's assets it is legally able to sell. [278230]

Mr Robathan: As at 31 March 2010, the Department's annual accounts gave the value of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) owned estate as some £15 billion. However these values represent replacement and not open market value.

As announced in October, the sale of assets such as the Defence Support Group, the Marchwood Sea Mounting Centre and the Defence stake in the telecommunications spectrum should generate in excess of £500 million over the spending review period.

The likely monetary value of those defence equipment assets that will become surplus following the Strategic Defence and Security Review, such as HMS Ark Royal and the Harrier fleet, is still being assessed.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28352]

Peter Luff: Measures that will drive down expenditure on attending or arranging conferences include a reduction in our reliance on travel by maximising the opportunities presented by modern technology and techniques, such as video or audio conferencing; the removal of first class air travel and, in all but exceptional circumstances, first class rail and business class air travel; an instruction to keep the number attending meetings and events from a single business area to the absolute minimum; and restrictions on payments for overtime and travelling time.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Mr Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible spent on press cuttings services in each of the last 12 months. [25493]

Peter Luff: The provision of a press cuttings service is regularly reviewed to ensure the best value for money, both in terms of the number of recipients and the search terms used. These are kept to a minimum consistent with maintaining the appropriate level of awareness.

The cost of press cuttings services to central London Ministry of Defence (MOD) divisions and to the three out of four MOD trading funds that pay separately for press cuttings services, is shown in the following table. Figures for October 2010 have yet to be confirmed; the information in the following table shows the most recent 12 months for which all information is available.

Cost (£)

	MOD cost	*Defence Science and Technology Laboratory*	*United Kingdom Hydrographic Office*	*Meteorological Office*
2009				
October	11,809.04	180.80	0.00	[1]
November	13,022.40	484.77	0.00	
December	11,151.60	535.62	0.00	
2010				
January	13,092.54	480.87	1,318.00	
February	10,880.13	230.52	0.00	
March	11,904.50	249.73	1,197.00	
April	9,833.00	155.94	1,413.00	
May	10,351.09	324.41	1,413.00	
June	13,309.41	202.27	1,197.00	
July	11,318.88	57.63	0.00	
August	11,671.26	413.58	1,591.00	
September	12,057.51	267.84	0.00	

[1] Press cuttings supplied under a fixed price contract. No additional monthly charges are paid. Annual total: £4,866.67

Note:

The figures given above exclude VAT and Newspaper Licensing Authority fees.

The fourth MOD trading fund the Defence Support Group spent no money on press cutting services during the past 12 months.

The expenditure incurred by the two MOD non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) that use press cutting services is shown in the following table.

£

	RAF Museum	*Army Museum*
2009		
October	77.00	516.30
November	92.60	512.23
December	122.60	472.28
2010		
January	54.20	448.67
February	77.00	579.56
March	61.40	686.57
April	87.80	489.14
May	66.20	497.48
June	100.00	406.89
July	66.20	399.76
August	120.20	617.99
September	75.80	542.18

France: Military Alliances

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made on collaboration between the UK and France on defence; and if he will make a statement. [28788]

Dr Fox: Following the UK/France summit on 2 November 2010, we are now pursuing closer co-operation with France in the areas detailed in the Summit Declaration on Defence and Security. We made a long-term commitment at the summit to the achievement of the envisaged level of co-operation, and the delivery of joint initiatives over the coming years. Discussions between officials and military staffs are ongoing, building on the existing close links between the UK and French Defence communities. The Senior Level Group, established under the terms of the Defence and Security Co-operation treaty, will deliver a progress report on co-operation to the next bilateral summit.

HMS Ark Royal

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to retain HMS Ark Royal as *(a)* a museum and *(b)* a training facility. [29779]

Peter Luff: HMS Ark Royal is due to formally leave service with the Royal Navy in early 2011. It is too early to determine the future plans for HMS Ark Royal.

Any decision will be in line with the Ministry of Defence's policy for handling surplus assets.

Military Bases: Aviation

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what area in hectares and what proportion of his Department's estate was constituted by airfields *(a)* in 2008 and *(b)* on the most recent date for which figures are available. [29427]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 8 December 2010]*: Information on the proportion of the defence estate that constitutes airfields is not held and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, the proportion of the Department's estate owned by the RAF in 2008-09 is published in the United Kingdom Defence Statistics 2009, which can be found on the Defence Analytical Services Agency website:

http://www.dasa.mod.uk/modintranet/UKDS/UKDS2009/c6/table601.html

A copy has been placed in the Library of the House.

Navy

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the RAF's responsibilities are under the Quick Reaction Alert North commitment; and if he will make a statement; [29254]

(2) what responsibility the RAF has in ensuring that the air sovereignty of other NATO member states is maintained; and if he will make a statement; [29262]

(3) what his policy is on the role of the RAF in NATO air policing of UK airspace; and if he will make a statement. [29263]

Nick Harvey: Under NATO's air defence and air policing arrangement, the UK shares responsibility for NATO Air Policing Area One. This area incorporates UK, Norwegian, Icelandic Danish and international airspace. The Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) force is responsible for covering this area and is launched when an aircraft entering this region cannot be identified by any other means or if NATO and UK military authorities consider it necessary to intercept and shadow an aircraft of specific interest.

The QRA force comprises a variety of elements maintained at readiness in order to allow NATO commanders to fulfil their delegated mission of 'defending the integrity of alliance airspace'. The force comprises fighter aircraft at RAF Coningsby (South) and RAF Leuchars (North), aerospace battle managers of the Air Surveillance and Control Systems Force and the NATO combined air operations centres. Acting together, they respond appropriately to protect both NATO and UK airspace.

Following the Strategic Defence and Security Review, the UK will continue to maintain the necessary force-level contributions to support NATO's agreed air defence and air policing mission NATO Air Policing Area One which includes UK airspace.

Nuclear Submarines: Decommissioning

Thomas Docherty: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he plans to publish the proposed criteria for suitable storage sites for radioactive waste from decommissioned nuclear submarines. [30065]

Peter Luff: The document 'Proposed Site Criteria and Screening Paper' was published on the Submarine Dismantling Project web site on 6 December 2010. It can be obtained from the following website:

http://www.submarinedismantling.co.uk/assets/downloads/sdp/sdp_proposed_site_criteria_screening_paper.pdf

Copies have been placed in the Library of the House.

The criteria proposed in the document have been used to identify the potential candidate sites for the initial stages of submarine dismantling. They will also inform the process of identifying potential candidate sites for the interim storage of intermediate level radioactive waste. In addition, this process will be informed by the potential development of a national waste consolidation strategy by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority.

Nuclear Weapons

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion of 17 June 2010, *Official Report*, column 503W, on nuclear weapons, which US establishments were visited by personnel from the Atomic Weapons Establishment in each of the last three years; and how many staff visited each such establishment. [21967]

Peter Luff: I will write to the hon. Member with the information requested and place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

USA: Cluster Munitions

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Government has reached any understanding with the US administration that the Secretary of State may give authorisation for US cluster munitions to be brought into or carried through the UK or its overseas territories; whether any such arrangement was discussed with US officials prior to Royal Assent to the Cluster Munitions (Prohibition) Act 2009; and if he will make a statement. [29401]

Dr Fox: Article 8 of the Cluster Munitions (Prohibitions) Act (2010) sets out that the Secretary of State is able to grant authorisation for visiting forces of states not party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions to possess cluster munitions on or transfer them through UK territory.

The US were made aware of this provision within the Bill, not least as it was required to enable the removal of their cluster munitions stockpiles. This removal has now been completed and there are no foreign stockpiles of cluster munitions on UK territory.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support

Gregg McClymont: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department is considering new policies to tackle the low-pay, no-pay cycle. [18536]

Chris Grayling: The spending review announced the biggest changes to our welfare system for a generation. It means we will be able to take action to get spending under control, cut the deficit, reform the system to make work pay and end the cycles of benefit dependency that exist in too many communities around the UK.

The universal credit will simplify the benefits system by moving from the current multitude of benefits to one streamlined payment. Benefit will be withdrawn at one unified rate, making it easy for people to see that it is always worth going to work, and exactly how much of their income they will keep. This will reduce risks for people by smoothing transitions into and out of work which is particularly important for people in short-term or low-paid work. Details of the credit, which we hope to introduce from 2013, will be set out in a White Paper to be published shortly.

We are also introducing the new Work Programme a multi-billion pound investment to support people into work. We will replace the ineffective and wasteful employment programmes of the past with a unified structure which treats people as individuals and is delivered by private and voluntary sector organisations, paid for by long-term results. Providers will only be paid for securing sustainable work, rather than a short-term or temporary job entry that might lead to returning to and cycling on and off benefit.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working within his private office in each of the last five years. [28568]

Chris Grayling: The following table gives details of the overtime paid to staff working within the Secretary of State's private office during the requested periods. Since May 2010 there have been a number of initiatives implemented to reduce this spend; overtime has been limited to a maximum of 10 hours per week per person, early morning/late night rotas have been introduced and staff have been encouraged not to work past 7 pm at night.

	Amount paid (£)
2005-06	56,300.36
2006-07	47,872.49
2007-08	42,355.07
2008-09	38,088.96
2009-10	38,222.73

Departmental Postal Services

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department has taken to identify those of its services that could be provided through the Post Office network. [25019]

Chris Grayling: The Government policy statement "Securing the Post Office Network in the Digital Age" published on 9 November 2010 sets out the services which this Department is considering piloting with the Post Office.

The Department has taken a positive and constructive approach, meeting regularly with the Post Office to consider new opportunities where the Post Office will be able to compete for future Government business.

These include a pilot to explore whether the Post Offices could verify supporting documents for customers of the Pension Service and whether it can play a role in supporting Jobcentre Plus in the national insurance number application process.

Housing Benefit

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of individuals who receive housing benefit, council tax benefit and child tax credit such that their tax credits are tapered to nothings as their income rises before they lose all entitlement to (*a*) housing benefit and (*b*) council tax benefit. [29171]

Steve Webb: The information requested is not available.

From February 2007, DWP has been collecting more detailed housing benefit and council tax benefit data electronically from local authorities. Over time this will improve the accuracy, timeliness and level of detail available in the published statistics, as the information supplied is quality assured.

At present, the management information needed to estimate overlaps between housing benefits and tax credits has not been sufficiently quality assured. Moreover, the housing benefit data contain information on tax credits only for those who are not in receipt of a passporting benefit.

National Insurance Benefits

Fiona O'Donnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department has made an assessment of the merits of mechanisms to protect the National Insurance contributions of stay-at-home parents who are no longer in receipt of child benefit under his Department's proposals on future child benefit arrangements. [30061]

Steve Webb: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave on 17 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 827W, to the hon. Member for Bolton West (Julie Hilling).

Remploy

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he (*a*) last met and (*b*) next plans to meet representatives from Remploy to discuss the future of the organisation. [30391]

Maria Miller: The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions routinely meets with the chair and chief executive of Remploy to discuss the company's current and future plans for supporting disabled people into work. The last meeting *(a)* was on 9 December and *(b)* there are no further meetings scheduled in the diary.

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he *(a)* last met and *(b)* next plans to meet trade union representatives to discuss the future of Remploy. [30392]

Maria Miller: As Minister with responsibility for Remploy, I met with trade union representatives on 9 September to discuss their proposals for the company.

There are no further meetings scheduled at this time but I am always willing to work with and listen to the views of the trade unions and all those who have a close interest in Remploy.

On 2 December I announced an independent review and call for evidence of the support the Government provide to disabled people who want to work—this includes the work of Remploy. This provides an opportunity for trade unions, people and organisations to submit evidence that will inform the development of our future strategy.

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he *(a)* last met and *(b)* next plans to meet Remploy employees to discuss the future of the organisation. [30393]

Maria Miller: As Minister for Disabled People, I have responsibility for Remploy.

I visited and met employees at the Acton and Coventry factories and the Coventry Employment Services branch on 25 August. I currently have no further visits arranged in my diary but I am always willing to work with and listen to the views of Remploy employees and all those who have a close interest in Remploy.

On 2 December I announced an independent review and call for evidence of the support the Government provide to disabled people who want to work—this includes the work of Remploy. This provides an opportunity for people and organisations to submit evidence that will inform the development of our future strategy.

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he *(a)* last visited and *(b)* next plans to visit a factory operated by Remploy. [30394]

Maria Miller: As Minister for Disabled People, I have responsibility for Remploy. I *(a)* visited the Acton and Coventry factories on 25 August and *(b)* there are currently no other visits arranged in my diary.

Social Fund

Damian Hinds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the overall average default rate for loans made through the Social Fund was in the period from 2004 to 2009. [27584]

Steve Webb: The available information is given in the table.

Amounts written off in Great Britain

£000

	Budgeting loans	*Crisis loans*	*Total*
2004-05	1,399	705	2,104
2005-06	2,114	910	3,024
2006-07	1,178	473	1,651
2007-08	823	467	1,290
2008-09	1,225	559	1,784
2009-10	1,105	578	1,683

Notes:

1. Figures include debt due to overpayments that has been written off. (Not all debt due to overpayments is written off.)

2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest £1,000.

Source:

Details that support the Social Fund White Paper Accounts for 2004-05 to 2009-10.

Damian Hinds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* grants and *(b)* loans from the Social Fund were made in the form of (i) community care grants, (ii) budgeting loans, (iii) crisis loans, (iv) sure start maternity grants, (v) funeral payments, (vi) cold weather payments, (vii) winter fuel payments and (viii) grants or loans in each other Social Fund category in the period from 2004 to 2009. [27587]

Steve Webb: The available information is given in the table.

Social Fund awards for Great Britain

Number (Thousand)

	Financial year					
Award type	*2004-05*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Community care grants	261	275	271	247	252	263
Budgeting loans	1,200	1,217	1,298	1,168	1,098	1,204
Crisis loans	1,000	1,016	1,072	1,431	1,965	2,697
Sure Start maternity grants	236	238	237	243	263	274
Funeral payments	44	42	41	40	41	39
Cold weather payments	213	988	402	472	8,416	11,870

Social Fund awards for Great Britain

Number (Thousand)

	Financial year					
Award type	*2004-05*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Winter fuel payments	11,430	11,555	11,750	12,123	12,421	12,681

Notes:

1. The information provided is Management Information. Our preference is to answer all parliamentary questions using official/national statistics but in this case we only have management information available. It is not quality assured to the same extent as official/national statistics and there are some issues with the data, for example, figures given do not include awards made clerically which had not been entered on to the social fund computer system by the end of the relevant financial year (for the first five categories).
2. Figures for community care grants, budgeting loans and crisis loans are for initial awards only and do not include awards made after review.
3. Figures for Sure Start maternity grants and funeral payments include awards made after re-consideration or appeal.
4. Figures for winter fuel payments include payments made to recipients within Great Britain and also recipients from within the European economic area who qualified for payments while resident in Great Britain.
5. Figures for cold weather payments and winter fuel payments are for payments made in respect of the relevant winter, but which may have been made in the following financial year.
6. Figures for winter fuel payments for 2005-06 have been revised and therefore do not match exactly those currently in the House of Commons Library. Information in the Library will be updated as soon as possible.
7. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 1,000.

Sources:

Winter Fuel Payments: Department for Work and Pensions Information Directorate 100% data.

Other award types: annual reports by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the Social Fund (apart from Cold Weather Payments for 2009-10 where the figure has been updated).

Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions with reference to the letter from Dr James Bolton to the Jobcentre Plus Customer Representative Group Forum dated 24 June 2010, if he will place in the Library a copy of each item of *(a)* evidence and *(b)* ongoing external evaluation his Department has collected on the effectiveness of work-focused health-related assessments. [28737]

Chris Grayling: Following careful consideration, the work focused health related assessment (WFHRA) element of the work capability assessment was suspended from 19 July 2010 for a period of two years. The WFHRA's suspension will provide an opportunity for the Department to reconsider the WFHRA's purpose and delivery. It also improves the capacity to focus on and cope with the demands of the reassessment of existing incapacity benefit customers.

Research has been carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies and has provided evidence on the WFHRA's effectiveness.

1. DWP Research Report 631 "Employment and Support Allowance: Early implementation experiences of customers and staff"; publication date March 2010.
2. DWP Research Report 707 "Employment and Support Allowance: Findings from a face-to-face survey of customers"; publication date November 2010.

An additional report, "Employment and Support Allowance—Customer and Staff experiences of the face-to-face Work Capability Assessment and Work-Focused Health-Related Assessment" will be published in the week commencing 20 December.

These reports will be made available in the Library.

State Retirement Pensions

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the change to the average net income of retired households in each income decile attributable to changes to *(a)* the basic state pension and *(b)* guarantee credit in the June 2010 Budget in (i) 2010-11, (ii) 2011-12, (iii) 2012-13, (iv) 2013-14 and (v) 2014-15; [28882]

(2) what estimate he has made of the change to the average net income of retired households in each income decile attributable to decisions on *(a)* pension credit and *(b)* savings credit following the comprehensive spending review in (i) 2010-11, (ii) 2011-12, (iii) 2012-13, (iv) 2013-14 and (v) 2014-15. [28883]

Steve Webb: The June 2010 Budget announced that the basic state pension would be uprated by a triple guarantee of prices, earnings or 2.5% whichever is highest. In general CPI will be used as the measure of prices in the triple guarantee. However in April 2011 the basic state pension will be increased by RPI.

Prior to the change, the basic state pension was expected to increase by RPI in April 2011, so the reform has no impact in 2011-12.

In April 2012 under current Office for Budget Responsibility economic assumptions the basic state pension will be increased by a larger amount due to the reform. The following table shows the proportion of all gainers that are in each income decile of the overall population income distribution and the average amount that they gain.

Effect of the basic state pension triple guarantee in 2012-13: Proportion of those gaining in each decile of the population income distribution and the average increase in their net income

	Decile									
	Bottom	*Second*	*Third*	*Fourth*	*Fifth*	*Sixth*	*Seventh*	*Eighth*	*Ninth*	*Top*
Percentage of gainers	4	8	13	14	13	12	12	9	8	7

Effect of the basic state pension triple guarantee in 2012-13: Proportion of those gaining in each decile of the population income distribution and the average increase in their net income

	Decile									
	Bottom	*Second*	*Third*	*Fourth*	*Fifth*	*Sixth*	*Seventh*	*Eighth*	*Ninth*	*Top*
Average amount gained (£)	0.70	0.90	0.80	0.80	0.90	0.90	0.80	0.90	0.90	0.80

Equivalent figures are not available for 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Changes to the uprating of pension credit were announced in the June Budget and in the comprehensive spending review. The June 2010 Budget announced that the standard minimum guarantee in pension credit will increase by the cash increase in a full basic state pension in April 2011. The comprehensive spending review announced that the savings credit maximum will be frozen in cash terms from April 2011 to April 2014.

The following tables show the proportion of all gainers that are in each income decile of the overall population income distribution and the average amount that they gain in 2011-12 and in 2012-13. Due to the small number of cases affected in the higher income deciles the top three deciles have been merged.

Effect of the pension credit uprating changes in 2011-12: Proportion of those gaining in each decile of the population income distribution and the average increase in their net income

	Decile							
	Bottom	*Second*	*Third*	*Fourth*	*Fifth*	*Sixth*	*Seventh*	*Eighth to tenth*
Percentage of gainers	7	14	29	20	10	8	9	4
Average amount gained (£)	3.00	3.10	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.10	2.30	2.20

Effect of the pension credit uprating changes in 2012-13: Proportion of those gaining in each decile of the population income distribution and the average increase in their net income

	Decile							
	Bottom	*Second*	*Third*	*Fourth*	*Fifth*	*Sixth*	*Seventh*	*Eighth to tenth*
Percentage of gainers	7	13	29	20	10	8	9	4
Average amount gained (£)	2.00	2.60	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90	1.70

Notes:

1. Estimates are derived from the Department's policy simulation model and so are subject to modelling and sampling error.

2. Estimates use latest Office of Budget Responsibility economic assumptions and assume that:

(a) Basic state pension would have been uprated by RPI in April 2011 and earnings in April 2012.

(b) The standard minimum guarantee and the savings credit threshold in pension credit would have been uprated by earnings in April 2011 and April 2012.

3. Percentages are rounded to the nearest percentage point so may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Changes in net income are rounded to the nearest 10p and are in cash terms.

4. Deciles are based on the distribution of net household income across the GB population after deducting housing costs. They use OECD equivalistion factors

Equivalent figures are not available for 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Take up of the guarantee credit pension credit was between 71% and 81% of those estimated to be entitled in 2008-09. The majority of pensioners in the lowest decile appear from the data collected in the Family Resources Survey to have an entitlement to pension credit but have not made a claim. So the proportion of gainers from the pension credit change who are in the lowest decile is relatively low.

Pension credit recipients within the top four deciles generally either have severe disabilities, which entitle them to disability benefits and premiums which increases their income to reflect the additional costs of disability, or be living within a wider household, for example with their families, whose income raises the household equivalised income to the higher deciles. In these circumstances the pensioner's income is assessed independently of the wider household to establish entitlement to pension credit.

Unemployed People: Per Capita Costs

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the average cost to the public purse through payment of benefits and lost revenue to the Exchequer of each person who is unemployed. [24235]

Chris Grayling: The information is not available in the form requested. Estimates of Exchequer costs in relation to all unemployed people would require information on the earnings and other circumstances of those people if they were not unemployed, which are unknown.

The Department does make estimates of the typical Exchequer impact associated with individuals who move from jobseeker's allowance (JSA) into work. Our current estimate for the net Exchequer savings from someone who would have claimed JSA instead of being in employment for a full year is £7,800, taking into account changes in benefit and tax credit entitlements, and changes in tax and national insurance payments. This is based on specific assumptions[1], and in practice the net effect will vary widely depending on individual circumstances.

The average length of JSA claim is less than a year (more than half of new JSA claimants leave benefit within three months and around three-quarters within six months) so the actual savings generated by an average jobseeker moving into employment will be less than this estimate. For this reason, the total Exchequer saving from all movements from JSA to employment could not be extrapolated from this estimate.

[1] Calculations using the DWP Tax-Benefit model 2009-10:

http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/tbm/
index.php?page=tbmt_arc

The estimate assumes that the individual earns £12,200 pa (gross) in work, and is based on the estimated demographic profile of those leaving JSA.

Unemployment: Yorkshire and the Humber

Jason McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many able-bodied persons of working age have been unemployed for a period of *(a)* six months, *(b)* 12 months, *(c)* two years, *(d)* three years, *(e)* four years, *(f)* five years and *(g)* more than five years in Yorkshire and the Humber; and what steps his Department is taking to reduce the level of long-term unemployment. [26549]

Chris Grayling: The estimated number of unemployed people in Yorkshire and the Humber Government office region aged 16 to 64 years, by duration of unemployment, are given in the following table. The table includes figures for all ILO unemployed and for ILO unemployed excluding those who are both covered by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 and have a physical health problem expected to last more than a year.

	ILO unemployed	
Duration of unemployment	*Excluding those covered by the DDA who have a physical health condition*	*All*
Less than 6 months	96,000	109,000
6 months but less than 12 months	42,000	51,000
1 year but less than 2 years	39,000	49,000
2 years but less than 3 years	14,000	16,000
3 years but less than 4 years	6,000	6,000
4 years but less than 5 years	3,000	5,000
5 years and over	7,000	9,000
Total	207,000	245,000

Notes:
1. Estimates have been rounded to the nearest 1,000. Some of the estimates are based on small samples; though large enough to be included in the table, they should be treated with caution.
2. A combination of physical and mental health conditions may contribute to an individual being covered by the DDA. The estimates in the table exclude only those covered by the DDA who have a physical health condition, regardless of any mental health condition. The latter include depression, bad nerves, anxiety, severe or specific learning difficulties, mental illness or suffering from phobia, panics or other nervous disorders.

Source:
Labour Force Survey July-September 2010.

These figures are a snapshot of the latest position and hide the dynamism of a labour market in which most people who experience unemployment leave quickly. Currently over half of new claimants to jobseeker's allowance leave within three months, around three quarters leave within six months and around 90% leave within a year.

However, to strengthen the support available for people to return to work, we are aiming to introduce the Work Programme from next summer. The Work Programme, will be a flexible, personalised programme built around the needs of individuals, providing the employment support customers need when they need it. It will contribute to the Government's key aims of fighting poverty, supporting the most vulnerable and helping people to break the cycle of benefit dependency.

Ahead of the implementation of the Work Programme, the Government will ensure that support will be in place with a more personalised service for claimants of all working age benefits from April 2011. Jobcentre Plus will have more flexibility to judge which interventions, from a menu of options, will help individual claimants most cost-effectively and which will meet local labour market needs.

Universal Credit

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what mechanism he plans to put in place to calculate universal credit payments for people who are self-employed. [28205]

Chris Grayling: We will provide for all those who are outside the pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) system, such as the self employed, to ensure that universal credit payments take into account all household earnings. We expect to develop a self reporting tool for those outside the PAYE system to provide us with their earnings information.

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he plans to announce his proposals for support for childcare costs following the introduction of universal credit. [28209]

Chris Grayling: The Government announced the approaches they are considering to support child care costs in the White Paper 'Universal Credit: Welfare that Works' (Cm 7957, November 2010). They will announce more detailed proposals over the coming months, following discussions with child care user groups and provider organisations.

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he plans to announce his proposals for the determination of eligibility for passported benefits following the introduction of universal credit. [28210]

Chris Grayling: Universal credit will replace a number of benefits and tax credits which are currently used as passports to other forms of support. The White Paper proposed that eligibility for these passported benefits should be determined in future on the basis of income or earnings thresholds. We are discussing the new approach with the other Government Departments and devolved Administrations who provide the benefits in question and will give more details in the coming months.

Mr Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how the proposed universal credit will account for *(a)* individual and *(b)* household housing costs. [29174]

Steve Webb: An appropriate amount of support will be added to the universal credit award to help meet the costs of rent and mortgage interest. For households with no other income, the amount provided, whether claiming as *(a)* a single adult or *(b)* two adults who live as a couple will be similar to the support currently provided through housing benefit or, in the case of mortgage interest, the appropriate income-related benefit.

We will provide further information on our preferred approach over the coming months as our policy develops.

Work Programme: Big Society Bank

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will discuss with the Minister for the Cabinet Office the provision of financial support through the Big Society Bank to enable smaller third sector organisations to participate in the Work Programme. [29648]

Chris Grayling: We are encouraging smaller civil society organisations to utilise all sources of funding available to them, to provide them with additional financial support to aid their participation in the delivery of the Work Programme. We expect voluntary and community sector organisations and social enterprises to play a significant role in the supply chains of prime contractors. Discussions are already taking place between my officials and Cabinet Office on the development of the Big Society Bank. The aim of the Big Society Bank is to support the growth of the social investment market and make it easier for social enterprises and other enterprising civil society organisations, including those looking to participate in the Work Programme, to access capital. The Big Society Bank will, however, be an independent wholesale organisation that will be free to make its own investment decisions based on the quality of opportunities presented by the market.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Afghanistan: Human Rights

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department provides to the Afghan government's Human Rights Support Unit; and if he will make a statement. [30178]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office provided financial support of £200,000 for the Afghan Government's Human Rights Support Unit (HRSU) through its strategic programme fund for human rights and democracy in 2009.

During 2010 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has also provided £6,000 funding through its bilateral programme budget for one human rights officer from the HRSU to complete a course in international human rights law at Nottingham university.

Albania: Floods

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will discuss with his Albanian counterpart the provision of assistance to those affected by floods in Shkodra, Northern Albania. [29607]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: I have been asked to reply.

British officials have been in contact with the Albanian authorities via their embassy in London, the British embassy in Tirana and through the European Union regarding the floods in Northern Albania. A number of countries in the region have already provided emergency assistance, and while the UK is not planning to provide direct aid, the Department for International Development will continue to monitor the situation.

Bahrain: Detainees

Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the government of Bahrain on its detention of Anthony James and his colleagues. [30252]

Alistair Burt: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised Mr James' travel ban with the Crown Prince on 30 November 2010. Our ambassador in Bahrain continues to raise the issue with the Bahraini authorities.

Bahrain: Politics and Government

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the partnership between the National Policing Improvement Agency and the Kingdom of Bahrain Interior Ministry. [27808]

Nick Herbert: I have been asked to reply.

The UK National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) has a constructive and ongoing relationship with the Bahrain Ministry of Interior. The UK NPIA supports the Bahraini police reform programme (which comes under the remit of the Ministry of Interior), delivering training on operations, community policing, criminal investigation and forensic science. At the request of the Ministry of Interior, further courses are being planned.

BBC External Services

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports on the effectiveness of the BBC World Service he received from British embassies and high commissions in *(a)* 2009 and *(b)* 2010. [29492]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) carries out an annual survey of its heads of mission on the effectiveness of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service in the countries to which they are accredited. Their comments are used for internal discussions of priorities both within the BBC World Service and between the World Service and the FCO.

Posts overseas are also invited to contribute to discussions between the FCO and the BBC World Service on the respective priorities and objectives of the two organisations.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Ministers in his Department have received unfavourable comment from their foreign counterparts on the operation of the BBC World Service since 6 May 2010. [29493]

Mr Jeremy Browne: No Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers have received any such comments.

British Council

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has for the future of the British Council assistantship programme; and if he will make a statement. [28479]

Mr Gibb: I have been asked to reply.

The Foreign Language Assistants programme, which is managed for the Department by the British Council, will continue as usual with recruitment for 2011-12 now open. The programme supports departmental and Government priorities by exposing pupils in our schools to mother-tongue speakers of other languages through the intake of foreign language assistants; and provides an opportunity for undergraduates from our universities to immerse themselves in a foreign language while working as an English language assistant in a school abroad.

British Council: Aviation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information his Department holds on the use by British Council staff of economy tickets for travel to and from the UK in the last three years. [29486]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not hold information on individual travel by British Council staff.

Current British Council travel policy for air journeys is that economy class should be used where the flight time is under eight hours and premium economy where the flight time is eight hours or more. Where premium economy is not available, business class may be booked.

Prior to November 2010, economy class was specified when the flight time was under five hours.

Cameroon: Politics and Government

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the safety of journalists in Cameroon; and if he will make a statement. [30219]

Mr Bellingham: We continue to be concerned about politically-inspired human rights abuses perpetrated against journalists in Cameroon. All forms of intimidation, harassment and arbitrary arrests are unacceptable. We strongly support the right to freedom of speech and press, and regularly call for an end to all such abuses and encourage the adherence to internationally accepted human rights standards in Cameroon.

We continue to press the Cameroonian authorities to decriminalise defamation. In parallel, we continue to encourage the authorities to create an effective media self-regulatory body to make journalists more responsible in their reporting. We have funded high-level training for journalists in Cameroon on ethics and professionalism.

We are closely following the case of Bibi Ngota, a journalist who died while on remand in prison in August 2010. Our High Commissioner in Yaounde has made representations on this issue (including the worrying allegations of torture) to the Prime Minister of Cameroon and the Vice Prime Minister in Charge of Justice. As a result of international pressure, the President of Cameroon commissioned a judicial investigation; we await details of the investigation's findings. We welcome the recent release of two other journalists that were detained in connection with the same affair.

We are closely following a case brought against four TV journalists for allegedly exposing classified information, linked to their investigation into various corruption scandals involving Government officials and influential tycoons.

Climate Change: International Cooperation

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received from his Special Representative for Climate Change on the potential effect of the conclusions of the DARA report on the Climate Vulnerability Monitor 2010 on his Department's expenditure priorities; and what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change and the Secretary of State for International Development on the matter. [30221]

Mr Bellingham: The Special Representative for Climate Change—John Ashton—and other officials from my department attended the launch event for the Climate Vulnerability Monitor 2010 on 3 December. I welcome its publication and its potential to play a valuable role in persuading people and governments to take climate change more seriously.

The Government did not have input into the report itself, nor do its conclusions specifically affect the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's expenditure priorities. An effective response to climate change underpins both UK security and prosperity and must be a central objective of British foreign policy.

An effective deployment of foreign policy assets is crucial to mobilising the political will needed if we are to shape an effective response, and our global network of UK climate attaches is widely recognised as a valuable source of influence and ideas on the politics and economics of climate change.

Colombia: Extradition

Sandra Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights on extradition to Colombia. [30376]

Mr Jeremy Browne: No such discussions have taken place.

Council of Ministers

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of meetings of the Council of Ministers were open to the public in the last 12 months. [30378]

Mr Lidington: All Council deliberations under the ordinary legislative procedure are available for the public to view live through the Council website on the internet

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=245&lang=EN

Other meetings are also sometimes available to be viewed. The decision on which meetings are open to the public rests with the presidency. Figures for the number of meetings available to be viewed are not automatically collated. The Council Secretariat is currently collating this information which I will forward separately to the Member on receipt.

Democratic Republic of Congo: Peacekeeping Operations

Tom Blenkinsop: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effects of implementing the proposals to remove UN peacekeepers from the Democratic Republic of Congo on the political situation in the region. [29716]

Mr Bellingham: The UN Security Council has always been clear that the peacekeeping mission must exit the Democratic Republic of Congo as soon as conditions allow. Any reconfiguration and exit strategy will be determined in light of the security situation on the ground, and State capacity to protect civilians and maintain stability. All parties agree we must avoid a premature departure which could impact on civilian protection.

In accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1925 (2010) and in consultation with the Government, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) has completed the withdrawal of 1,494 troops. The UN Security Council will continue to keep under continuous review the strength of the mission on the basis of regular assessments from both the UN and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo; the first of which should be reflected in the UN Secretary-General's next report to the Security Council in the new year.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28357]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) always strives to hold conferences and events in the most cost effective way possible. Within the UK, when appropriate, conferences are hosted at FCO premises and are planned by the FCO in-house conference and events team. Competitive quotations are always obtained for any external services to ensure we secure value for money.

As directorates and posts overseas arrange events independently, no central record is held on the criteria for expenditure and the information requested could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Embassies: Electronic Surveillance

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many eavesdropping attempts against British embassies have been recorded in the last five years. [29520]

Alistair Burt: It is the longstanding policy of successive Governments not to comment on security and intelligence matters.

Greece: British Nationals Abroad

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent progress there has been in discussions with the Greek authorities to ensure that UK coroners are able to obtain police reports following the death of a British citizen in that country; and if he will make a statement. [30177]

Mr Lidington: Both the UK and Greece are party to a number of European instruments that facilitate co-operation between judicial systems within Europe. We are working hard bilaterally to improve the provision of locally-obtained information about deaths of British citizens in Greece to coroners in the UK. We have made Greek officials aware of the role and importance of the coroner service within our judicial system. Officials from the Ministry of Justice, with the support of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, are working with the Greek Ministry of Justice to make progress. We plan to meet the relevant Greek authorities early in 2011 so that inquests can be concluded without further delay.

Iran: Aviation

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the government of *(a)* Austria and *(b)* Germany on permission for refuelling of Iranian planes; and if he will make a statement. [R] [29800]

Alistair Burt: The UK recently worked closely with European partners to adopt the EU's strongest ever sanctions package against Iran. While we do not encourage trade with Iran, these sanctions do not prohibit the sale of aviation fuel to Iranian airlines. The Government have written to fuel providers in the UK to clarify this fact. However, some companies in Europe have taken the commercial decision to stop providing fuel to Iranian airlines in line with their interpretation of US sanctions.

Iran: Cost of Living

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on changes in prices for *(a)* food and *(b)* fuel in Iran; and if he will make a statement. [R] [29799]

Alistair Burt: Economic mismanagement by the Iranian Government has been a major factor in domestic concern about economic issues. We are aware of sometimes significant increases in the cost of water, electricity, gas and some food products in Iran during 2010, although we have seen no uniform pattern across the country. The price of fuel has remained unchanged and it remains heavily subsidised.

Iran: Human Rights

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on human rights in Iran. [29610]

Alistair Burt: The human rights situation in Iran remains deeply disturbing. We regularly raise our concerns with the Iranian authorities, urging them to cease all abuses. Last month, we secured strong international condemnation of Iran's human rights record by the UN, through a resolution which was passed by 80 countries representing every continent. We are working closely with other EU member states to consider how to increase pressure on the Iranian regime urgently to improve its human rights record.

Iran: Prisoners

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has made representations to his Iranian counterpart on the case of Nasrin Sotoudeh; and if he will make a statement. [30111]

Alistair Burt: I remain deeply concerned about Nasrin Sotoudeh, lawyer and human rights defender currently in prison in Iran on charges which include working for a human rights organisation. We have repeatedly raised our concerns about human rights defenders in Iran with the Iranian authorities. On 15 November 2010, I issued a statement expressing my deep concern about Ms Sotoudeh. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary also raised her plight in a message to mark International Human Rights Day on 10 December.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what recent representations he has made to the Government of Iran on the continued detention of Reza Shahabi; [30398]

(2) what representations he has made to the Government of Iran on the hunger strike of Reza Shahabi in Evin Prison, Tehran. [30399]

Alistair Burt: I raised our concerns about the ongoing detention of Iranian trade union leader Reza Shahabi with the Iranian ambassador in August. Since then, we have highlighted our wider concerns about the restrictions placed on Iranian trade unions in a resolution passed by the UN in November, condemning Iran's human rights record. We are concerned by reports that Mr Shahabi is on hunger-strike and I have asked my officials to seek further information. I will continue to raise our concerns about Iran's human rights record, including the repression of trade union activities, with the Iranian authorities.

Israel: Fires

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received of casualties in the forest fire in Haifa and the Carmel Forest, Israel; whether any British casualties have been recorded; and if he will make a statement. [29839]

Alistair Burt: We were in close touch with Israeli authorities following the outbreak of this fire. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary made a statement on 3 December underlining that our thoughts were with all those who had lost family members or had had to leave their homes due to the blaze. As of 5 December the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre report that the fires had claimed 42 lives. None of these are reported as British nationals.

The UK through the Royal Air Force deployed two helicopters from Cyprus to assist with the international effort to put out the fires. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister also spoke to the Israeli Prime Minister on 3 December to underline our support.

Japan: Whales

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to his counterpart in Japan on Japanese policy on whaling in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary. [29558]

Mr Jeremy Browne: I refer the hon. Member to my response to the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent North (Joan Walley) of 8 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 315W.

Kashmir

Simon Danczuk: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's policy is on self-determination in Kashmir. [30012]

Alistair Burt: The long-standing position of the UK is that it is for Pakistan and India to find a lasting resolution to the situation in Kashmir, including the issue of self-determination of the Kashmiri people. Any resolution should therefore take into account the wishes of Kashmiris. It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to mediate in finding one. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary reiterated this in the Foreign Affairs debate on 27 May and during his visit to Pakistan in June.

Simon Danczuk: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the potential security threat to *(a)* the UK, *(b)* India, *(c)* Pakistan and *(d)* Kashmir arising from changes in the level of al-Qaeda presence in Kashmir; and what account has been taken of such assessments in his Department's policy on Kashmir. [30013]

Alistair Burt: We continue to call for an end to external support for violence in Kashmir and recognise that al-Qaeda core pose a significant threat by directing other groups, networks and individuals to mount attacks in all areas in South Asia as well as against UK interests. The UK is working with the governments of Pakistan and India to tackle terrorism and violent extremism which threatens all our interests.

However, the long-standing position of the UK is that it is for Pakistan and India to find a lasting resolution to the situation in Kashmir, one which takes into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to mediate in finding one. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary reiterated this in the Foreign Affairs debate on 27 May and during his visit to Pakistan in June.

Lithuania: Anti-Semitism

Mr MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will publish the letter of 25 November 2010 sent by the UK and other ambassadors in Lithuania concerning the growing manifestations of anti-Semitism in Lithuania. [29665]

Mr Lidington: It has not been the practice of successive Governments to publish letters sent by diplomats in a confidential capacity. It is important for the effective conduct of international relations for diplomacy to be able to take place on a confidential basis where necessary.

Mikhail Khordorkovsky

Mr MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will instruct Her Majesty's ambassador in Moscow to convey to the judicial authorities in Russia the concern of many right hon. and hon. Members regarding the continuing imprisonment of Mr Mikhail Khordorkovsky. [29762]

Mr Lidington: It is not for the Government to comment on the specifics of ongoing judicial processes, but our long-standing position has been to stress the importance of the rule of law—including fair and impartial trials. Our embassy in Moscow is closely watching developments in Mr Khodorkovsky's case, and is participating in trial monitoring with EU partners and the United States. We regularly raise concerns with the Russian Government bilaterally—including through our annual human rights dialogue—and with EU partners, and will continue to do so.

Pakistan: Capital Punishment

Mr Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations have been made to the Pakistan authorities on the death sentence on Asia Bibi under blasphemy laws; and if he will make a statement. [30057]

Alistair Burt: The UK opposes the death penalty in all circumstances as a matter of principle. In Pakistan, alongside EU colleagues, we regularly raise our support for its abolition and work with civil society to encourage reform.

Our high commission in Islamabad has raised the case of Mrs Asia Bibi with the Punjab Government and we will continue to do so at a senior level. Specific representations to the Government of Pakistan are being made by the head of the EU delegation, with UK support, in Islamabad. I raised the case of Asia Bibi with the Pakistan Minister for Minorities, Shahbaz Bhatti, on 9 December 2010.

Uganda: Press Freedom

Pauline Latham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with representatives of the African Union on the likely effects on the international obligations of Uganda of enacting the Press and Journalist (Amendment) Bill in that country. [29542]

Mr Bellingham: I have not discussed Uganda's Press and Journalist (Amendment) Bill with African Union representatives. Officials from our high commission in Kampala have, however, raised the proposed Bill with the Ugandan Foreign Minister, the Minister of Guidance and Information, and the Deputy Attorney-General.

In each case the UK has called for the legislation to be drafted in line with Uganda's own constitution and relevant international standards. The UK also has a regular dialogue with the African Union Commission on governance, including press freedom, in Africa.

USA: Disclosure of Information

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the US administration on the disclosure of classified material by Wikileaks. [28797]

Alistair Burt: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary spoke to Secretary Clinton on 26 November 2010 about a range of issues including Wikileaks.

Written Questions: Government Responses

Mr Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he plans to provide a substantive answer to Question 27479, on the Council of Ministers, tabled on 24 November 2010. [30253]

Mr Lidington: From May to September 2010 (the latest month for which there is an official EU record publicly available), the Government agreed to adopt the following legal acts by legislative procedure:

1. Position of the Council at first reading with a view to the adoption of Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the framework for the deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems in the field of road transport and for interfaces with other modes of transport

6103/4/10 REV 4

2. Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on transportable pressure equipment and repealing Council Directives 76/767/EEC, 84/525/EEC, 84/526/EEC, 84/527/EEC and 1999/36/EC (Text with EEA relevance)

PE-CONS 14/1/10 REV 1

3. Regulation (EU) No 540/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 June 2010 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

PE-CONS 12/1/10 REV 1

4. Position of the Council at first reading with a view to the adoption of a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes

6106/1/10 REV 1

5. Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the trans European transport network (Recast)

PE-CONS 13/2/10

6. Regulation (EU) No 641/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 247/2006 laying down specific measures for agriculture in the outermost regions of the Union

PE-CONS 23/1/10 REV 1

7. Regulation (EU) No 640/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 establishing a catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna Thunnus thynnus and amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1984/2003

PE-CONS 17/1/10 REV 1

8. Directive 2010/45/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on standards of quality and safety of human organs intended for transplantation

PE-CONS 19/2/10 REV 2

9. Decision No 388/2010/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 providing macrofinancial assistance to Ukraine

PE-CONS 20/1/10 REV 1

10. Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the participation of the Union in a Joint Baltic Sea Research and Development Programme (BONUS) undertaken by several member states (Text with EEA relevance)

PE-CONS 21/10

11. Council Directive 2010/45/EU of 13 July 2010 amending Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax as regards the rules on invoicing

10858/10

12. Position of the Council at first reading with a view to the adoption of a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council extending Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 to nationals of third countries who are not already covered by these Regulations solely on the ground of their nationality

11160/4/10 REV 4

13. 2010/427/EU: Council Decision of 26 July 2010 establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service

11665/1/10 REV 1

14. Draft amending budget No 3 of the European Union for the financial year 2010—Council position

DAB No 3/2010

8434/10

15. Draft amending budget No 5 of the European Union for the financial year 2010—Council position

DAB No 5/2010

11208/10

16. Draft amending budget No 6 of the European Union for the financial year 2010—Council position

DAB No 6/2010

11251/10

17. Draft amending budget No 7 of the European Union for the financial year 2010—Council position

DAB No 7/2010

112119/10

18. Position of the Council at first reading with a view to the adoption of a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repealing Council Directive 89/106/EEC (Text with EEA relevance)

10753/3/10 REV 3

19. Position of the Council at first reading with a view to the adoption of a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the application of patients' rights in cross-border health care

11038/2/10 REV 2

20. Regulation (EU) No 911 /2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 on the European Earth monitoring programme (GMES) and its initial operations (2011 to 2013) Text with EEA relevance

PE-CONS 22/10

21. Regulation (EU) No 912/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 setting up the European GNSS Agency, repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1321/2004 on the establishment of structures for the management of the European satellite radio navigation programmes and amending Regulation (EC) No 683/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council

PE-CONS 24/1/10 REV 1

The following measures, on which the Government abstained were adopted (on the basis of qualified majority voting):

22. Regulation (EU) No 539/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 June 2010 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund as regards simplification of certain requirements and as regards certain provisions relating to financial management

PE-CONS 9/3/10 REV 3

23. Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC

PE-CONS 18/2/10 REV 2

During this period, the Government have not voted against any measures adopted on the basis of qualified majority voting.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Council Tax Benefits

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will publish his Department's analysis of the effects of the implementation of the Government's policy to localise and reduce council tax benefit by 10 per cent. on *(a)* Sunderland city council, *(b)* other local authorities in the North East and *(c)* local authorities in England. [29550]

Robert Neill: The Government are working to develop the new arrangements. As such, the Department has not undertaken such analysis.

Departmental Consultants

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* contract and *(b)* project brief relating to the engagement by his Department of LLM Communications to assist the Campaign for More and Better Homes. [29379]

Grant Shapps: The last Government used public funds to pay LLM Communications to organise a series of housing debates on behalf of the Campaign for More and Better Homes (an independent coalition of cross-sector housing organisations).

I have today placed in the Library of the House a copy of the Programme Proposal that was provided by the Campaign for More and Better Homes. The Department no longer holds on record a copy of the contract relating to the Campaign for More and Better Homes and LLM Communications.

As outlined in my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's press notice of 5 August 2010, my Department has instructed its arm's length bodies to cancel all outstanding contracts with lobbyists:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/newsroom/1666195

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28117]

Robert Neill: The Department fully support the Government's aspirations to award 25% of contracts to small and medium-sized enterprises while ensuring that value for money to the tax payer is not compromised. The steps the Department has taken so far to engage with these enterprises are:

DCLG will highlight contracts that have been awarded to small and medium-sized enterprises when we publish our contracts in full from January 2011;

DCLG already makes extensive use of Office of Government Commerce model pre-qualification questionnaires in its day to day procurement activities and will adopt the newly issued mandatory pre-qualification question set by 1 January 2011 (with arm's length bodies to follow by 1 March 2011) in accordance with Cabinet Office timescales;

DCLG endorses the continued approach to ensure that all suppliers and their subcontractors are paid promptly and within existing targets;

DCLG will also work with Cabinet Office to support their approach to eliminate overly prescriptive and burdensome procurement processes as part of the initiative to speed up procurement.

The Department has started to make positive steps in levelling the playing field for these enterprises while also acknowledging that there is more work to be done. 16% of the Department's spend in the last financial year was with small and medium-sized enterprises.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with reference to the answer to Lord Oakeshott of Seagrove Bay of 8 April 2010, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column WA454, on government expenditure, by how much the previous administration proposed to reduce funding to *(a)* the New Deal for Communities programme, *(b)* the Working Neighbourhoods Fund, *(c)* the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative, *(d)* the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant, *(e)* other time-limited communities programmes funded by his Department, *(f)* other programmes operated by his Department and *(g)* housing growth and regeneration funding. [29361]

Robert Neill: The previous Government's pre-Budget report in December 2009 proposed cuts of £340 million from regeneration funding. This includes £40 million from closing the New Deal for Communities, and £300 million from cuts to Regional Development Agency regeneration spending and programmes; the Working Neighbourhoods Fund; the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative, and the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant.

The savings also included cutting £25 million from smaller DCLG communities programmes and £100 million from other small DCLG programmes, as well as savings of £35 million in housing benefit from reducing fraud.

Decisions on the split of savings between individual programmes were not finalised by the previous Administration.

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will place in the Library a copy of the most recent accounts of each part of the Local Government Group. [29384]

Robert Neill: The Local Government (LG) Group is owned by its member local authorities. It is independent of central Government, and questions about its activities should be put directly to them. However, the LG Group has provided the Department with the 2009-10 annual accounts for the bodies within the group:

Local Government Association

Improvement and Development Agency

Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services

Employers Organisation for Local Government

Public Private Partnerships Programme

Local Government International Bureau

Leadership Centre for Local Government.

Copies of these accounts will be placed in the Library.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate he has made of the expenditure of his Department and its predecessors on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28387]

Robert Neill: The requested information is not held centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Housing: Construction

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much land in each local authority area *(a)* is available for development and *(b)* was so available in each of the last 10 years. [30159]

Grant Shapps: Local authorities publish information on how much land is available for housing in their Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments.

Information on previously developed land that may be available for development is provided in the National Land Use Database. Statistics for 2008 are published on the Homes and Communities website in Table S1 in the report at the following link:

http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/public/documents/NLUD_%20FINAL%20accessible.pdf

Statistics for 2006 and 2007 are published on the Department for Communities and Local Government website, via the following link:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningbuilding/planningstatistics/previouslydevelopedbrownfield/

Statistics for 2001 to 2005 are available through the archived National Land Use Database website, via the following link:

http://tna.europarchive.org/20081209183550/http://www.nlud.org.uk/draft_one/results/results_index.htm

Housing: Prices

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps he is taking towards the policy aim of being in a position where house prices continue to grow; and what estimate he has made of house price growth in each of the next five years. [30226]

Grant Shapps: House prices have doubled in the last 10 years, putting home ownership beyond the reach of many potential first time buyers. This Government believe that what is needed now is not a return to rapid house price growth, but a period of house price stability. House price stability creates the right conditions for the building industry, and can thus contribute to a sustainable economic recovery.

Achieving this depends above all on the return to economic and financial stability which the Government are seeking to achieve through debt reduction and their commitment to abolish the structural deficit.

The recent house price forecasts produced by the new independent Office for Budget Responsibility for the autumn statement and the latest average of the HM Treasury's independent forecasts suggest there will be modest falls in house prices in 2011 and rises beyond.

Details can be found at:

http://budgetresponsibility.independent.gov.uk/econ-fiscal-outlook.html

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data_forecasts_index.htm

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment he has made of the likely effects of falling house prices to 2015 on *(a)* the number of homes that will be sold and *(b)* the number of homeowners in negative equity. [30227]

Grant Shapps: The Department for Communities and Local Government does not publish housing market forecasts.

According to the recent house price forecasts produced by the new independent Office for Budget Responsibility for the Economic and fiscal outlook report this autumn, and the latest average of the HM Treasury's independent forecasts, there will be modest falls in house prices in 2011 and rises beyond.

Any effects of falling house prices on *(a)* the number of homes that will be sold and *(b)* the number of homeowners in negative equity, will be correspondingly modest.

For further details please see:

http://budgetresponsibility.independent.gov.uk/econ-fiscal-outlook.html

Negative equity estimates are produced by the Bank of England. The most recent figures can be found at:

http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/quarterlybulletin/qb090203.pdf

Land: Registration

George Freeman: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment he has made of the effect on local authorities of funding personal land charge searches through general council tax revenues rather than payments by the service user. [28397]

Mr Djanogly: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have carried out an assessment of the costs of revoking the fee for a personal search of the local land charges register. As I explained to my hon. Friend in my answer to his question of 16 September 2010, *Official Report*, column 1190W, there should not be any loss of income to local authorities in England in the current financial year, as the loss will be met by central Government. For 2011-12 and in future years the ongoing loss of fees has been taken into account as part of the spending review settlement.

Local Government Finance

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he plans to pilot tax increment financing measures in 2011-12. [30162]

Robert Neill: The Government have confirmed that they will legislate to introduce powers to allow tax increment financing and we will move as quickly as possible to do so. We are considering how to deliver tax increment financing in the context of our wider proposals on business rates retention. The Local Government Resource Review will look at both issues in the round and develop proposals by July 2011.

Mortgages

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Chancellor of the Exchequer and *(b)* the Financial Services Authority on the its mortgage market review; and if he will publish the record of each such discussion. [30228]

Grant Shapps: The new Government are committed to supporting aspiration to home ownership and share the underlying objective of the Mortgage Market Review to create a stable, sustainable market for all participants. We must avoid the boom and bust that the property market has experienced in the last decade.

We want to see a regulatory framework that supports access to home ownership and new housing supply while preventing repossessions.

The Government believe the regulatory changes made by the Financial Services Authority must be proportionate and avoid unnecessary prescription on the mortgage industry.

My officials have worked closely with the Financial Services Authority and the Council of Mortgage Lenders on these proposals and will continue to do so. I have discussions with Treasury Ministers on a range of issues relating to my ministerial brief. The Financial Services Authority recently made a presentation on their responsible lending proposals to the Home Finance Forum, which I jointly chair with the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Private Rented Housing: Rents

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether his Department uses information from propertyfinder.com to determine average market rents. [29925]

Grant Shapps: The Department does not use information from propertyfinder.com to determine average market rents.

Revenue Support Grant

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he plans to announce the Revenue Support Grant for 2011-12. [29974]

Robert Neill: I refer my hon. Friend to the oral statement made today by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State.

Right to Buy Scheme

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he plans to change the discount level on Right to Buy sales. [30107]

Grant Shapps: The Government have no plans to change Right to Buy discounts.

Social Rented Housing

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will publish his Department's impact analysis on the social effects of implementing the Government's policy on flexible social housing tenancy. [29545]

Grant Shapps: We will publish an impact assessment on social housing tenure reform in due course.

Mr Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will assess the effect on the *(a)* right to remain, *(b)* rent levels and *(c)* succession rights of social housing tenants of his proposals for social housing. [29643]

Grant Shapps: There will be no changes to the security and rights of existing social tenants. The Government proposes to provide social landlords with freedom to offer fixed-term or lifetime tenancies and additional succession rights to new tenants.

We propose that landlords will continue to let properties at social rents except where development agreements reached with the Homes and Communities Agency provide for an Affordable Rent to apply.

Detailed information about the new delivery model for affordable housing will be published in the new year. In addition a written ministerial statement setting out more details on the Affordable Rent product was made on 9 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 31-34WS.

Our policy paper on social housing reform 'Local decisions: a fairer future for social housing' has been placed in the Library of the House, and we welcome representations and comments during the consultation period.

Mr Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what steps he plans to take to inform *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* housing associations on the level of income above which tenants may be required to vacate social housing; [29644]

(2) what provision he plans to make for *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* housing associations to collect information on the incomes of social housing tenants under his proposed reforms and what estimate he has made of the likely cost to the public purse of such activity. [29645]

Grant Shapps: The Government proposes to provide local authorities and housing associations with freedom to offer fixed-term or lifetime tenancies to new tenants. Social housing providers will be expected to set their own policies for the award and renewal of tenancies of different types.

There will be no changes to the security and rights of existing social tenants.

These proposals are subject to consultation and a copy of the policy paper has been placed in the Library of the House.

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he plans to publish a draft direction on the new Tenancy Standard arising from his proposals for changes to social tenancy conditions. [30160]

Grant Shapps: We will publish a summary of responses to our proposals (set out in "Local decisions: a fairer future for social housing") following the end of the consultation period on 17 January, and will at that stage make clear our views on the likely content of a Tenancy Direction.

Full consultation on a formal direction to the regulator on the content of a Tenancy Standard will take place later in 2011.

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what his Department's policy is on tenant management of housing owned by *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* registered social landlords; and if he will make a statement. [30322]

Grant Shapps: Local authority tenants wishing to take over the management of their homes from their landlord have a statutory right to do so under the

Housing (Right to Manage) (England) Regulations 2008. Tenants of registered social landlords can enter into a voluntary agreement with their landlord if they wish to manage their housing.

Social Rented Housing: Construction

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many social homes were built in each financial year since 1997-98; and how many are expected to be built during financial years *(a)* 2010-11 and *(b)* 2011-12. [29853]

Andrew Stunell: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Coventry South (Mr Cunningham) on 29 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 470-71W.

Information on the numbers of affordable homes provided in each financial year since 1997-98 to 2009-10 is published in Live Table 1009 on the Department for Communities and Local Government website at:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/1406088.xls

Social Rented Housing: Disability

Caroline Nokes: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps he is taking to ensure the provision of social housing which meets the needs of people with disabilities. [27965]

Andrew Stunell: Under the allocation legislation certain people must be given 'reasonable preference' for social housing and this includes people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability.

In the spending review we announced investment of over £6.5 billion in housing. This includes over £2 billion to make existing social homes decent and almost £4.5 billion investment in new affordable housing to deliver up to 150,000 affordable homes.

We have also secured £6.5 billion of funding to Supporting People helping vulnerable people and those with disabilities live independent lives.

Temporary Accommodation: Homelessness

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 1 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 543-44W, on temporary accommodation: homelessness, to which local authorities the answer refers. [30161]

Grant Shapps: The representations referred to in the answer of 1 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 543-44W, Temporary Accommodation: Homelessness, are representations received from the London boroughs of Newham, Wandsworth and Westminster. The issue of greater flexibility in how local authorities are permitted to discharge the main homelessness duty has also been raised with officials at the Department for Communities and Local Government informally by a number of other local housing authorities.

Travellers: Caravan Sites

Gavin Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on what date his Department plans to bring forward its proposed amendments to planning circular ODPM 01/2006 on Gypsy and Traveller sites. [29698]

Robert Neill: We want to move expeditiously but subject to proper process in relation to our intention to withdraw Circular 01/2006 and will be holding a public consultation in the new year. Circular 01/2006 is currently extant but decision makers are entitled to have regard to the fact that it is proposed to withdraw it.

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps his Department plans to take to establish the number of Traveller pitches in each local authority area; and whether he expects local residents to participate in that process. [30103]

Robert Neill: Local authorities are best placed to determine how to meet their housing needs—including Traveller site provision—in consultation with local communities.

The Government are committed to abolishing regional strategies via the Localism Bill. This will remove the system of top-down Traveller site targets and make local authorities responsible for determining the right level of site provision in their area.

We have announced our intention to withdraw circulars 01/2006 ("Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites") and 04/2007 ("Planning for Travelling Showpeople") and will be holding a public consultation on this in the new year. The details of our proposed light-touch replacement policy will be set out in that.

Written Questions: Government Responses

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the two answers of 3 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 817W, on social rented housing: rents, and the answer of 11 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 458W, on housing: construction, and the determinations of the Procedure Committee of 22 and 25 November 2010, when he plans to provide further responses to the Questions tabled by the hon. Member for Plymouth, Moor View. [30193]

Grant Shapps: I am now able to provide further responses to the questions tabled by the hon. Member.

Pursuant to the answers provided on 3 November 2010 the Department has national level information on market rents for privately-owned properties from the English Housing Survey from 2008-09 onwards and the Survey of English Housing prior to 2008-09. The most recent national level estimates were published on 27 October 2010 in the English Housing Survey Household Report 2008-09 which is available from:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/pdf/1750765.pdf

Regional level results are based on a two year average due to sample size issues. The most recent regional level estimates are an average for 2006-07 and 2007-08, available from:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/141656.xls

Updated regional rent estimates will be available when the 2009-10 data are published in 2011.

Information on median rents for broad rental market areas, used to determine local housing allowance rates, is published by the Valuation Office Agency and is available from:

http://www.voa.gov.uk/LHADirect/Documents/LHA_percentile_rates_Nov_2010.html

Estimating market rents of social rented properties is not straightforward and different approaches can be taken. One example is in research carried out by Professor Steve Wilcox for DCLG where an assessment of regional social rents in comparison to market levels is made in terms of the capital value of the property, rental yield and housing association management and maintenance costs.

http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/rentspolicyanalysis

As I set out in my written ministerial statement on 9 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 31-34WS, our new delivery model for affordable housing will allow housing associations to set rents of up to 80% of market rent on some properties. A housing association's calculation of the market rent would need to be based on a residential lettings estimate for a property of the appropriate size, condition and area. Valuations should be in accordance with a RICS recognised method. The Homes and Communities Agency will publish a full framework document early next year that will form the basis for bids from providers who are interested in offering affordable rent.

With regard to the question answered on 11 November relating to the estimate made of the total number of new homes to be built in each year of the next six years. We do not provide estimates of future new build numbers, as forecasting is imprecise and could affect market sentiment. However, there are various private sector organisations who can, and do, use our statistics to make their own forecasts.

Ultimately, the number of new homes that are built will depend upon market conditions and decisions that are taken at the local level. This Government are rebalancing power from central Government to local authorities and local people, replacing top down targets with fiscal incentives for local authorities to develop housing. We are also seeking to remove unnecessary regulation on the house building industry.

JUSTICE

Blood: Contamination

Owen Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether an inquest has been requested by the family of any person who has died as a result of being infected with contaminated blood products in NHS facilities since 1985. [29359]

Mr Djanogly: Coroners have a statutory duty to hold an inquest in certain cases, and do so only at the request of bereaved families in very exceptional circumstances. Although the Ministry of Justice collects and publishes statistics from coroners in England and Wales during each calendar year, we do not collect explicit information of such an individual nature and this information is not held centrally otherwise. On 14 October I announced plans to introduce changes to the coroner system and as we take this forward there may be an opportunity to review the matters on which annual statistics are collected and published.

Civil Proceedings: Legal Costs

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether he plans to issue guidance to judges on conduct in a dispute to be considered *(a)* frivolous or fraudulent and *(b)* unreasonable or obscure in order to avoid qualified one-way costs shifting under his proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [29336]

Mr Djanogly: The consultation paper, "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", published on 15 November 2010, sets out proposals for introducing qualified one way costs shifting. We await responses in order to be able to take a view on the way forward on this issue.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will estimate the annual number of cases of *(a)* injuries of maximum severity, *(b)* road traffic accidents, *(c)* clinical negligence, *(d)* occupier and public liability accident, *(e)* occupational disease and *(f)* employers' liability accidents with realistic prospects of success which will not be brought as a consequence of implementation of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Green Paper. [29410]

Mr Djanogly: It is not possible to make detailed estimates in these areas, as this will depend, in part, on the individual decisions of claimants, defendants, lawyers and insurers on a case by case basis. The preliminary impact assessments can be found at

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/consultations.htm

and respondents are invited to comment on the preliminary impacts identified.

Claims Management Regulator

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many claims handlers have *(a)* been refused registration and *(b)* had their registration rescinded by the Claims Management Regulator in 2010 to date. [29499]

Mr Djanogly: I can confirm that:

(a) From 1 January until 30 November 2010, the Claims Management Regulator has refused authorisation of 10 Claims Management Companies.

(b) From 1 January until 30 November 2010, the Claims Management Regulator rescinded the authorisation of 179 Claims Management Companies.

Conditional Fee Agreements

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will review his Department's proposals on amendment or abolition of the indemnity principle in costs in order to simplify the *(a)* drafting and *(b)* comprehensibility for litigants of conditional fee agreements. [29412]

Mr Djanogly: As set out at paragraph 276 of "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", the Government are not proposing any further work on the indemnity principle at this stage.

Conditional Fee Agreements: Scotland

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether he has estimated the annual number of visible personal injury claims not pursued through the courts in Scotland as a result of rules on non-recovery of *(a)* success fees for conditional fee agreements and *(b)* after-the-event insurance premiums. [29411]

Mr Djanogly: We have made no such estimate. Preliminary impact assessments were published alongside "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Proposals", and can be found at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/consultations.htm

Respondents are invited to comment on the preliminary impacts identified.

Court of Protection

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many complaints the Court of Protection has *(a)* received and *(b)* resolved in each of the last 10 years. [30018]

Mr Djanogly: Prior to the commencement of the Mental Capacity Act on 1 October 2007, the Public Guardianship Office (PGO) acted as the administrative arm of the then Court of Protection (CoP) and the two functioned as a combined entity.

On 1 October 2007 the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) and a new Court of Protection were created and the OPG initially provided administrative support to the Court.

On 1 April 2009 the CoP administration transferred to Her Majesty's Court Service and from that date complaints relating to the Court have been handled independently from the OPG.

Records of complaints received are available from December 2001 and are as follows:

			Complaints
Period	*PGO/CoP*	*OPG*	*CoP*
3 December 2001 to 31 March 2002	460		
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	1,807		
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	577		
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005	591		
1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006	437		
1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007	712		
1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008		918	358
1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009		1,969	890
1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010		1,827	563
1 April 2010 to 30 November 2010		[1]4,389	237

[1] In this period the OPG changed its complaints process and improved the mechanisms by which complaints were recorded. In addition there was also a significant increase in volumes of work during this period and a large majority of the complaints related to delays caused by the resultant backlog.

Notes:

1. Between 3 December 2001 and 30 November 2010, 129 complaints were referred onwards from the OPG to either the Adjudicator's Office or the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) to consider further due to the complainant being dissatisfied with the outcome. Of these, 30 were not upheld, 30 were partially upheld, two were upheld, one was withdrawn and six are still ongoing. Records of the other referrals are unavailable.
2. For Court of Protection complaints approximately 25% are related to judicial decisions or to fees which cannot be dealt with by the Court itself.

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the current value is of the Court of Protection Fund held at the Bank of England; what rate of interest has accrued in respect of that fund in each of the last 10 years; and what the rate of interest is expected to be in 2010-11. [30019]

Mr Djanogly: The Court Funds Office (CFO) holds approximately £2 billion of funds on behalf of approximately 16,000 Court of Protection clients. Funds paid into court are not held by the Bank of England. All funds deposited with CFO are transferred to the Court Funds Investment Account (CFIA). The CFIA is administered on behalf of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt by the UK Debt Management Office, an Executive agency of HM Treasury.

The following interest rates have applied to funds held on behalf of Court of Protection clients over the last 10 years:

	Percentage
From 1 August 1999	7
From 1 February 2002	6
From 1 February 2009	3
From 1 June 2009	1.5
From 1 July 2009	0.5

It is not possible to predict what interest rates CFO will be able to pay on client funds in the future. Interest rates are set and regularly reviewed by the Lord Chancellor with the concurrence of the Treasury. In reviewing the rate paid the Lord Chancellor takes into account a number of factors including the amount of interest received on funds against the amount of interest paid to clients, the level and mix of funds held by CFO and administration costs. Taking into account all of these factors the Lord Chancellor decides on the appropriate level of interest paid on funds held in court. The Lord Chancellor will be keeping the rates paid on the special account under review, and will make a direction to change the rate when necessary with the agreement of the Treasury.

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the *(a)* longest, *(b)* shortest and *(c)* average time taken was for families to access funds of individuals deemed to have mental incapacity by the Court of Protection in the latest period for which figures are available. [30020]

Mr Djanogly: Since October 2007, the average time taken by the Court of Protection to appoint a deputy with authority to access funds on behalf of a person who lacks capacity is 14 weeks against a service standard of 21 weeks. Where urgent access to funds is required, for example to pay care costs, the court will make emergency orders which in exceptional cases can be made on the same day as the application. Where a case is contentious, for example where the family cannot agree on a course of action, the final decision may take longer than 21 weeks. Where necessary, the court will put in place interim arrangements allowing someone to access funds to meet the immediate needs of the person who lacks capacity.

Funds may be held in court by the Court Funds Office (CFO) on behalf of a person who lacks capacity. If a deputy has been appointed by the Court of Protection with authority to access funds held by the CFO, the deputy may submit a payment request to the CFO to withdraw funds on behalf of the person they represent. Between 1 April 2010 and 31 October 2010 the Court Funds Office processed 97.2% of payment requests within five days of receipt of a properly completed payment request.

Courts: Closures

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether he has received representations from Nottinghamshire police on the consequences for them of closing *(a)* Retford and *(b)* Worksop court. [29476]

Mr Djanogly: I refer the hon. Member to my answer to him of 1 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 510W, where I said

> "Nottinghamshire Police Authority has submitted a county wide response to the consultation proposals. This is being carefully considered alongside the other responses received. We hope to announce decisions by the end of the year."

Departmental Communications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 8 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 59-60W, on departmental communications, if he will publish an itemised account of the amount spent by the Information Commissioner's Office on *(a)* internal and *(b)* external communications in each year from 2000-01 to 2009-10. [29612]

Mr Djanogly: The following table provides an itemised account of spending by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) on internal and external communications where information is available. Detailed information on expenditure is retained for six years. Therefore no figures are available before 2004-05.

The figures provided are based on actual invoices. Therefore they vary slightly from those given in the answer of 8 November 2010 which were based on the ICO's annual accounts, which are accruals rather than cash based. They do however reconcile. This information has been provided by the ICO.

ICO expenditure on internal and external communications

£

Cost headings	*2009-10*	*2008-09*	*2007-08*	*2006-07*	*2005-06*	*2004-05*
Annual report	44,341.81	46,667.04	39,240.22	35,198.62	27,510.74	34,917.04
Campaigns	53,229.88	364,208.48	73,322.35	163,727.44	[1]-22,936.96	0
Media monitoring and press cuttings	24,697.73	28,243.96	53,048.77	39,607.04	32,575.37	26,822.89
Media relations	34,329.79	8,448.10	48,884.72	211.50	44,206.57	195,703.38
Conferences and seminars	74,397.59	70,093.91	36,102.48	24,774.25	86,647.06	31,915.58
Design and print	258,210.13	74,884.66	160,278.55	428,274.38	311,252.10	197,137.43
Distributions	103,439.92	135,313.21	140,680.08	106,485.05	78,617.80	50,306.88
Management fees[2]	385,465.71	347,184.28	339,218.93	341,473.39	282,533.58	146,507.47
Online	220,059.42	245,837.90	271,303.94	434,735.87	236,190.32	196,223.54
Research	76,522.16	140,145.05	283,585.60	256,183.13	278,625.42	187,664.10
Internal communications	11,582.91	12,323.06	36,999.21	20,334.86	[3]—	[3]
Total	1,286,277.05	1,473,349.65	1,482,664.85	1,851,005.53	1,355,222.00	1,067,198.31

[1] Represents a refund for a cancelled campaign.

[2] Fees paid to professional partners and consultants, e.g. for running the ICO Press Office (in-house from 1 October 2010), and also to the Central Office of Information.

[3] Not available. There was minimal expenditure on internal communications during 2005-06 and 2004-05 and what expenditure there was cannot be individually identified.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what his Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30027]

Mr Djanogly: The Ministry of Justice does not centrally monitor budgets for conference expenditure. Conference budgets are set by individual business groups from their total resource allocation and are subject to change through the year as each group manages its spending and responds to local business needs.

Drugs: Offences

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many convictions there were for drug offences in the *(a)* six months to 6 May 2010 and *(b)* six months from 6 May 2010. [29505]

Mr Blunt: Information on the number of persons found guilty at all courts for drug offences for the years 2000 to 2009 (the latest available) can be viewed in the table.

The Ministry of Justice plan to publish information on 2010 court proceedings in the spring of 2011.

Number of persons found guilty at all courts for drug offences in England and Wales, 2000-09[1, 2]

Area	*2000*[3]	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*[4]	*2009*
England and Wales	44,621	45,621	49,036	51,162	39,197	39,090	39,582	44,565	52,941	56,793

[1] The statistics relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences the principal offence is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[2] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

[3] Staffordshire police force were only able to supply a sample of data for magistrates courts proceedings covering one full week in each quarter for 2000. Estimates based on this sample are included in the figures as they are considered sufficiently robust at this high level of analysis.

[4] Excludes convictions for Cardiff magistrates court for April, July and August 2008.

Source:

Justice Statistics Analytical Services - Ministry of Justice.

Family Courts

Simon Hart: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the effect on the average length of time a case is in the family courts of litigants choosing to represent themselves; and if he will make a treatment. [29691]

Mr Djanogly: The Ministry of Justice has not made an assessment of the effects on the average length of time a case takes in the family courts of litigants choosing to represent themselves.

We do have information on whether or not the applicant(s) and respondent(s) in the case had a legal representative. It should be noted that parties without a recorded representative are not necessarily litigants in person.

The following table gives details of the average durations of family cases completed in the financial year 2009-10, split by case type and by whether or not the applicant(s) and respondent(s) in the case had a legal representative.

Figures are only given for the High Court and the county courts as information is not available for all Family Proceedings courts. The High Court and county courts hear almost all divorce cases, about 25% of all public law cases and about 80% of all private law cases.

Average duration of cases completed in county courts or the High Court in England and Wales between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010, by legal representation

	Divorce		*Public law*		*Private law*	
Legal representative	*Mean duration (weeks)*	*Number of decrees absolute*	*Mean duration (weeks)*	*Number of orders*	*Mean duration (weeks)*	*Number of orders*
Both applicant and respondent	55.7	40,088	54.5	680	37.8	23,738
Applicant only	44.6	44,904	36.5	46	27.9	9,280
Respondent only	59.7	2,707	56.2	2,575	44.7	3,573
Neither applicant nor respondent	34.1	28,796	34.1	81	38.6	2,710

Notes:

Figures are given where the applicant/respondent's representative has been recorded or left blank. Therefore, it should be noted that parties without a recorded representative are not necessarily litigants in person.

Divorce:

1. Figures include dissolutions of marriage or civil partnership and annulments of marriage or civil partnership.
2. The duration is calculated from the earliest recorded petition date to the earliest recorded decree absolute date.
3. Figures exclude cases where there is no record of a petition and cases where the decree absolute date is before the petition.
4. Time from petition to decree absolute may be affected by the time it takes the applicant to apply for the decree absolute once the decree nisi (first order) has been issued. In normal circumstances the applicant may apply for the decree absolute six weeks after the decree nisi has been issued, but (s)he may choose to wait longer than this.
5. The mean is the total of all of the durations, divided by the number of decrees absolute.

Public and Private Law:

1. Private law refers to cases brought under the Children Act 1989 where two or more individuals, usually separated parents, are trying to resolve a private dispute about their child(ren). Public law refers to child welfare cases where a local authority, or other authorised person, is stepping in to protect a child from harm or neglect.
2. Private law includes cases where a section 8 order (contact, residence, prohibited steps, specific issue) was made or where a parental responsibility order was made. Public law includes cases where a care order or a supervision order was made. This does not necessarily mean that these were the orders applied for.
3. The durations in both case types are calculated from the earliest application date (or the date the case was transferred in to the court if that is earlier) to the date of the order event.
4. A case is defined as applicant represented if at least one applicant in the case has a recorded representative. Similarly with respondents.
5. The mean is the total of all of the durations, divided by the number of orders.

Source:

HMCS FamilyMan system

Fines

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice in what circumstances a fine imposed by a magistrates court may be written off. [29521]

Mr Djanogly: The magistrates courts follow a strict write off policy. The scenarios, which can be administratively cancelled, are:

> the defendant is known to have emigrated or gone abroad and there is very little real prospect of return or recovery of the sum;
>
> the defendant has died. However a claim against the estate can be made;
>
> the defendant has been sent to a mental health institution for a period of 12 months or more;
>
> the defendant was a limited company which has been wound up and there are no goods on which to levy distress, or a company has ceased trading and it is not considered financially worthwhile for the court to initiate winding-up proceedings;
>
> the sum outstanding is less than £10 and the cost of enforcement would be disproportionate to the amount outstanding; and
>
> where the defendant cannot be traced and the fine is over 12 months old and all reasonable steps have been taken to enforce, including the use of all the new intelligence sources without success.

Writing off does not absolve the offender of their obligation to pay and should that person's whereabouts become known at a later date, further action would be taken.

Legal cancellation can be applied after the case has been reconsidered by a judge or a magistrate. Typically, legal cancellations are used where a case has been reopened and the defendant has been found not guilty following the presentation of additional information. Legal cancellations can be full or partial remittances of financial penalties.

Homicide

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether the Government plans to review the law on murder. [29347]

Mr Blunt: The Law Commission reviewed the law on murder and made recommendations in their report 'Murder, Manslaughter and Infanticide' in 2006. Their recommendations have been implemented in part and the Government will be considering whether to take forward those which remain outstanding.

Human Rights

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the potential for legal challenge to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 which do not define the Scottish Parliament as a legislature. [28394]

Mr Djanogly: The meaning of "legislature" in article 3 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights, as scheduled to the Human Rights Act 1998, is currently being considered by the European Court of Human Rights in a case against the United Kingdom. The Human Rights Act itself does not define "legislature" in this provision.

Human Rights: Care Homes

Stephen Mosley: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will assess the merits of extending the scope of the term public authority in section 6(1) of the Human Rights Act 1998 to include private care homes that provide care to elderly people who have been *(a)* referred and *(b)* funded by a local authority. [29078]

Mr Djanogly: Such situations are already covered by the Human Rights Act. Under section 145 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008, a care home that provides residential social care that has been arranged by a local authority under sections 21(1)(a) and 26 of the National Assistance Act 1948, or the equivalent provisions in Scotland and Northern Ireland, is deemed to be exercising a function of a public nature for the purposes of section 6 of the Human Rights Act. It is immaterial for these purposes the extent to which the local authority funds the care that it has arranged under its statutory obligations. Section 145 came into force on 1 December 2008, and applies to any acts (as defined by section 6 of the Human Rights Act) as of that date.

Human Trafficking: Compensation

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what compensation victims of human trafficking may receive from *(a)* the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board and *(b)* assets seized from traffickers without adversely affecting their entitlement to benefits; and if he will make a statement. [30196]

Mr Blunt: Victims of human trafficking are able to claim compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme for physical injury or psychological injuries. This ability to claim is not dependent upon prosecution of the perpetrator.

In addition, prosecutors may request compensation following confiscation of assets under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. The court has discretion to make both a compensation order and a confiscation order against the same person in the same proceedings if it believes that the defendant will have sufficient means to satisfy both orders in full. Alternatively, the court may order that all or part of the compensation order be paid out of the confiscation order.

Neither of these compensation measures affects victims' entitlement to support services provided to victims during their recovery and reflection period.

Legal Aid

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what his policy is on the use of funding provided through the civil legal aid scheme to bring cases against *(a)* current and *(b)* former members of the armed forces. [29683]

Mr Djanogly: Generally, legal aid in civil cases is available to anyone who qualifies, provided that the case is within the scope of the scheme. Each application is considered on an individual basis and is subject to statutory tests of the applicant's means and the merits of the case.

The Ministry of Justice consultation "Proposals for the Reform of Legal Aid in England and Wales" was published on 15 November. The consultation proposes that claims against public authorities should remain within the scope of the legal aid scheme where they concern: (i) abuse of position of power; and/or (ii) significant breach of human rights; and/or (iii) negligent acts or omissions falling very far below the required standard of care.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether he has assessed the potential effects of his proposed reforms to legal aid funding on the contract between Public Interest Lawyers and the Legal Service Commission; and if he will make a statement. [29684]

Mr Djanogly: Both impact assessments (IAs) and equalities impact assessments (EIAs) were published alongside the consultation paper. While the documents do consider impacts on providers both at the aggregate level (in the case of IAs) and by protected equalities characteristic (EIAs), neither document considers the impact on any one particular provider of publicly funded legal services, and particularly as the information is likely to be commercially sensitive.

Legal Aid: Expenditure

John Stevenson: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what his Department's expenditure on legal aid in respect of *(a)* family court cases and *(b)* criminal cases involving residents of (i) Cumbria and (ii) Carlisle constituency was in each of the last three years. [30397]

Mr Djanogly: It is not possible to provide a regional breakdown of expenditure based upon the location of the recipient of legal aid. Legal aid expenditure and the value of claims submitted by legal service providers[1] located within Cumbria and Carlisle are set out in the following table, by area of law.

Carlisle is a constituency area geographically located within the Cumbria criminal justice area and as such all the figures for Cumbria are inclusive of those for Carlisle.

Spend in Carlisle and Cumbria by financial year

£

	Family	*Criminal*	*Non-family*
2009-10			
Carlisle	1,102,806	1,426,848	582,718
Cumbria	3,497,768	4,983,281	1,626,479
2008-09			
Carlisle	1,423,337	1,348,365	424,671
Cumbria	4,225,565	4,735,964	1,069,431
2007-08			
Carlisle	1,201,946	1,189,985	269,119
Cumbria	3,331,919	4,476,051	1,036,030

Legal Costs

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will assess the likely effect on standards of employment practice of his proposals to discontinue legal aid in employment cases. [30094]

Mr Djanogly: I do not intend to conduct such an assessment.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the merits of restricting *(a)* broadcast and *(b)* other advertising by (i) lawyers and (ii) claims handling organisations. [30233]

Mr Djanogly: The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) has overall responsibility for the Codes that govern broadcast advertising and this is reflected in the Conduct Rules that apply respectively to lawyers and claims management businesses. We understand that the ASA is considering whether or not to undertake a review of advertising to take account of the recommendations made in Lord Young's report "Common Sense—Common Safety".

Other advertising by lawyers would be a matter for the Solicitor's Regulation Authority (SRA) and the Legal Services Board (LSB) to consider. The SRA is currently consulting on a new Code of Conduct, and will be working with the LSB, the MoJ and other stakeholders to ensure that any changes support the effective provision of legal services.

The Claims Management Regulator who is based within the MoJ is soon to consult on an amendment to the rules governing claims management businesses advertising. The first stage will be to bring forward measures to prohibit claims management businesses from offering and marketing advance cash payments, other financial rewards or gifts that might induce people to initiate claims with them. This will be followed by consideration of what further, wider changes are necessary in relation to claims management businesses advertising and marketing taking full account of the outcome of any review of advertising by the ASA and SRA.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many appeal cases relating to contracted out employment group claims have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded through legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld. [30241]

Mr Djanogly: The table provides a breakdown of:

The number of appeal cases heard;

The number of cases with legal representation that were successful; and

The number of cases without legal representation that were successful.

It is not possible to provide information on the number of cases that were funded through legal aid as that level of detail is not recorded.

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[1] The means by which some legal aid schemes are administered, such as legal help, for example, mean that it is only possible to identify the category of law from the claims submitted rather than the expenditure paid to those providers. Therefore, the figures in the table comprise a mixture of cash expenditure and the value of claims.

	214-COEG		
	2007-08	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Total number of appeal cases heard i.e. were determined at hearing, (oral or paper)	3	3	1
Number of appeal cases with representation where appeal successful[1]	0	0	0
Number of appeals without representation where the appeal was successful	0	0	0

[1] TS Immigration and Asylum cases, noted "publicly funded".

Powers of Attorney

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) what recent estimate he has made of the average cost charged by a family solicitor for preparing a Lasting Power of Attorney application; [30054]

(2) what the average time taken was for the Court of Protection to *(a)* process a Lasting Power of Attorney form and *(b)* notify the applicant of the outcome in the latest period for which figures are available; [30055]

(3) how many Lasting Power of Attorney applications were *(a)* lodged with the Court of Protection and *(b)* approved in the last two years. [30056]

Mr Djanogly: Lasting powers of attorney (LPAs) were introduced by the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA), which was commenced on 1 October 2007.

The LPA forms were designed to be completed without the automatic need for professional advice. However, some applicants' circumstances may be such that they wish to take advice from a solicitor or other professional. Such private client work can be undertaken for a fixed fee or may be charged on the basis of actual time spent depending on how the firm involved chooses to charge for the work involved. As a result, the cost of using a solicitor can vary greatly and the Ministry of Justice has not made any estimate of average costs charged for this type of work.

Under the MCA, LPAs are registered with the Office of the Public Guardian rather than the Court of Protection. In certain limited cases, where there are issues with the registration of an LPA, or objections are made by certain parties, an application may need to be made to the Court of Protection for determination of that matter before the OPG can register.

Figures on the average time taken by the OPG to process an application in the current financial year are outlined in the following table. The timescales include a statutory six week waiting period during which objections to registration can be made.

2010	*Weeks*
April	12
May	14
June	12
July	11
August	12
September	13
October	12
November	11

84,050 LPA applications were received in the period 1 December 2008 to 30 November 2009 with 75,863 being successfully registered.

159,328 LPA applications were received in the period 1 December 2009 to 30 November 2010 with 128,538 being successfully registered.

Prisoners' Release: Employment

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of prisoners released in each of the last three years are in employment. [29515]

Mr Blunt: Information is not held on the current employment status of all prisoners released in the last three years. However, prisoners' employment status is recorded on discharge and this is used to measure the proportion who enter employment. Figures in relation to 2007-08 and 2008-09 are set out in the following table.

	Percentage of offenders entering employment on discharge
2007-08	27.0
2008-09	26.0

Notes:

1. 2007-08 was the first year for which employment outcomes were reported as a proportion of discharges.

2. Figures for 2009-10 will be published on the Ministry of Justice website shortly as part of an addendum to the 2009-10 NOMS annual report.

Data Sources and Quality:

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Prisoners: Heroin

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many heroin addicts were *(a)* in prison and *(b)* convicted of a criminal offence in each of the last three years. [29649]

Mr Blunt: It is not known exactly how many heroin addicts were *(a)* in prison, or were *(b)* convicted of a criminal offence in each of the last three years, because data on heroin addiction is not routinely collected.

Our best estimate of the scale of heroin misuse comes from a survey of 1,435 prisoners sentenced to between one month and four years in 2005 and 2006 which showed that approximately 30% had used heroin in the four weeks before custody. On average, these prisoners used heroin every day in the four weeks before custody, and around 80% felt that their heroin usage was out of control.

The Department of Health also collects information on the number of clinical treatments for heroin addiction delivered in prisons. I refer the hon. Gentleman to the response given by the Minister of State, Department of Health, the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Paul Burstow), on 28 June 2010, *Official Report*, column 404W, which gave these statistics.

Prisoners: Repatriation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many British prisoners detained in each foreign country were repatriated to UK prisons between 6 May 2010 and 6 December 2010. [29504]

Mr Blunt: Between 6 May and 6 December 2010, 59 British nationals were repatriated from overseas to serve the remainder of their sentence in prisons in England and Wales. The following table indicates from which countries these prisoners were repatriated.

Country	*Number of transfers*
Australia	1
Belgium	1
Brazil	1
Costa Rica	1
Cyprus	4
France	3
Germany	1
Ghana	3
Grenada	2
Hong Kong	1
Ireland	11
Japan	1
Norway	1
Panama	1
Portugal	1
Slovakia	1
Spain	11
Sweden	2
Thailand	1
Trinidad and Tobago	5
Turkey	2
United States	4

The repatriation of prisoners from overseas to prisons in Scotland and Northern Ireland is a matter for the relevant devolved Administration.

Prisoners: Sentencing

Gavin Shuker: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many of those presently serving a custodial sentence were given a sentence of *(a)* five years or less, *(b)* four years or less, *(c)* three years or less, *(d)* two years or less and *(e)* one year or less; and if he will make a statement. [30379]

Mr Blunt: The following table provides information on custodial sentences in prison establishments in England and Wales by sentence length band as at 30 September 2010.

Prison population as of 30 September 2010 for sentence lengths of less than five, four, three, two and one years

Sentence length	*Population*
Less than:	
five years	34,642
four years	28,770
three years	22,119
two years	15,051
one year	8,096

Note:
These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Prisoners: Shrewsbury Picket Dispute

Mr Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will order a public inquiry into the events leading up to and the imprisonment of participants of the 1972 Shrewsbury Picket dispute. [28877]

Mr Djanogly: The Secretary of State will not order a public inquiry into the events surrounding the 1972 Shrewsbury Picket dispute. He considers that this would be a disproportionate response as an application to the Criminal Cases Review Commission remains an option for the majority of those involved.

Prisoners: Violence

Mr Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what estimate he has made of the level of violence on the prison estate *(a)* directed at prison officers by prisoners and *(b)* between prisoners; and what steps he is taking to reduce violence on the prison estate. [29071]

Mr Blunt: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) records assaults by prisoners on all staff and on other prisoners. The numbers of recorded assaults by prisoners on staff and on other prisoners is as follows:

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Prisoner on prisoner	10,892	11,530	12,018	12,834	12,147
Prisoner on officer	3,101	3,131	2,890	2,789	2,645

NOMS is undertaking a wide-ranging review of its violence reduction strategy, including methods for identifying and managing violent prisoners, performance measures for assault reporting by prisons, and prosecutions through the courts of violent prisoners. The review will examine the individual approaches to violence management that have developed around the estate and will ensure that good practice is shared and built upon. The revised policy will be implemented in spring 2011.

NOMS takes the safety of staff and prisoners very seriously and is committed to a robust approach on prosecuting the most serious of these offences. We are working with the Attorney-General's office and the Home Office to improve consistency in the involvement of the police and Crown Prosecution Service. All prisons have in place a violence reduction policy which is used to identify the problems specific to that establishment and to develop practical solutions to managing violence.

NOMS and the Prison Officers' Association (POA) are jointly committed to a zero tolerance approach to assaults on staff, visitors and prisoners. This has recently been formalised in a joint statement, signed by the national chairman of the POA and the chief executive of NOMS. A poster campaign advertising the zero tolerance approach was launched in February 2010.

Prisons: Smoking

Guy Opperman: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) how many prisons in the north-east are smoke-free; [30045]

(2) whether any prison in the north-east has a smoke-free wing. [30046]

Mr Blunt: None of the prisons in the north-east area are smoke-free.

One unit at Acklington is designated for non-smoking prisoners. One houseblock at Holme House is smoke-free. The healthcare centres at HMP Durham and Low

Newton are residential smoke-free areas and at Deerbolt, the intention is for the healthcare centre to go smoke-free in the new year.

Guy Opperman: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what steps are being taken to ensure that individual prisons are smoke-free. [30047]

Mr Blunt: Prisoners are permitted to smoke in their cells or rooms, and where prisoners share a cell or room arrangements are in place for smokers only to share with other smokers. Smoking is forbidden in all communal areas. Currently we do not consider it reasonable to prevent prisoners from smoking at all during their sentence.

Ranby Prison: Bassetlaw

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many prisoners convicted of each category of offence *(a)* detained in Ranby prison and *(b)* normally resident in Bassetlaw constituency have served their sentence but not been released. [29498]

Mr Blunt: Prisoners who have served a sentence of imprisonment can be held beyond their release date in limited circumstances, such as:

(i) Foreign national prisoners that are being held solely under immigration powers (immigration detainees) and

(ii) Prisoners remanded in custody pending further charges.

In respect of (i), as at 29 November 2010, there were five immigration detainees held at HMP Ranby. Their offence groups consisted of rape (1), production of drugs (3) and conspiracy to produce drugs (1).

There were, however, no immigration detainees held in any prison, including HMP Ranby, with a recorded residential address or proxy, described as follows, in the Bassetlaw constituency area.

In respect of (ii), as at 29 November 2010, there were no prisoners held in HMP Ranby who have been remanded in custody pending further charges.

Identifying the number and offences of prisoners from the Bassetlaw constituency area held in all prisons beyond their release date pending further charges could be obtained only at disproportionate cost as it would first involve inspection of individual records of all remand prisoners to identify those being held following their discharge from a sentence of imprisonment.

Information on a prisoner's residence is provided by prisoners on reception into prison and recorded on a central IT system. Addresses include a prisoner's home address, an address to which they intend to return on discharge and next of kin. To analyse the population as a whole, if no address is given, a prisoner's committal court address is used as a proxy to determine the area in which a prisoner is resident.

Remand In Custody: Young People

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many *(a)* remands in custody for under 18 year-olds and *(b)* court-ordered secure remands were for a period of seven days or fewer between April 2009 and March 2010. [29776]

Mr Blunt: The following table shows the number of custodial remand episodes ending with a period of seven days or fewer for *(a)* remands in custody for under 18-year-olds and *(b)* court-ordered secure remands for 2008-09. The 2009-10 data will be available when the Youth Justice Board Annual Workload Statistics are released in January 2011.

An episode refers to a period a young person has spent in custody and it is possible that one young person can start or finish more than one custodial episode at different points of each year for different offences or for changes in legal basis for detention, such as remand to sentence.

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and may be subject to change over time.

2008-09

	Custodial episodes ended with a duration of seven days or fewer		
	Number	*Percentage*	*Custodial episodes ended*
Remand to custody	1,190	27	4,444
Court-ordered secure remands	157	22	711

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many and what proportion of children remanded in custody were looked-after in the most recent 12 month period for which information is available. [29815]

Mr Blunt: Information on the number of children in custody in England and Wales who had previously been looked after is not held centrally. However, a joint Youth Justice Board and HM Inspectorate of Prisons report 'Children and Young People in Custody 2008-2009', published on 9 December 2009, reported on a survey of every under-18 prison establishment in England and Wales. Responses to the survey indicated that a quarter of young men and nearly half of young women had been in care at some point.

Reoffenders

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the reconviction rate was for those who received *(a)* sentences of 12 months or less and *(b)* sentences to carry out unpaid work for a first offence in each of the last five years. [29387]

Mr Blunt: The information requested is as follows:

Table 1 shows the number and one year re-conviction rate of adult offenders with no previous offences who were discharged from a custodial sentence of less than 12 months between January and March of the last 5 years.

Table 2 shows the number and one year re-conviction rate of adult offenders with no previous offences who commenced a court order under probation supervision with a stand alone unpaid work requirement between January and March of the last three years. Figures for this breakdown are only available from 2006 following the introduction of community orders and suspended sentence orders in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 which came into force in April 2005.

Table 1: Re-conviction rate of adult offenders with no previous offences discharged from a custodial sentence of less than 12 months

	Number of offenders	*Proportion of re-offenders convicted (%)*
2004	525	7.4
2005	515	8.7
2006	509	9.2
2007	382	8.4
2008	541	6.8

Table 2: Re-conviction rate of adult offenders with no previous offences who commenced a court order under probation supervision with a stand alone unpaid work requirement

	Number of offenders	*Proportion of offenders re-convicted (%)*
2006	2,269	7.8
2007	2,653	8.6
2008	2,570	7.2

Re-conviction rates provided here should not be compared to assess the effectiveness of sentences, as there is no control for known differences in offender characteristics.

More information on the reoffending rates is available from the Ministry of Justice website.

http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/reoffendingofadults.htm

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) what proportion of prisoners released in each of the last three years have re-offended; [29484]

(2) what proportion of those serving a community sentence have re-offended in each of the last three years. [29697]

Mr Blunt: The following table shows the one year re-conviction rate of adult offenders who were released from custody or who commenced a court order (court orders include pre-CJA 2003 community sentences, new community orders and suspended sentence orders) in the first quarter of each of the last three years that data are available for.

One year re-conviction rate for offenders released from custody or who commenced a court order in the first quarter of each of the last three years

		Proportion of offenders who are re-convicted in a one year follow up period	
		Custody	*Court orders*
2006	Q1	46.5	35.4
2007	Q1	47.2	36.1
2008	Q1	49.4	36.1

Re-conviction rates provided here should not be compared to assess the effectiveness of sentences, as there is no control for known differences in offender characteristics. However, work has been carried out to compare like for like offenders which enable a reliable comparison of proven reoffending rates between offenders receiving short custodial sentences and offenders commencing a court order under probation supervision. The results show a 7 percentage points lower reoffending rate for offenders commencing a court order under probation supervision. Further information on this work can be found in paper 1.1 of the Compendium of Reoffending Statistics and Analysis available at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/compendium-reoffending.htm

Further information on adult reoffending is available at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/reoffendingofadults.htm

Tribunal Service: Social Security Benefits

Richard Fuller: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the average length of waiting time is for a Tribunal Service hearing for those appealing benefits claims. [29781]

Mr Djanogly: The average national waiting time for those appealing benefit claims to the Tribunals Service is 17.7 weeks from receipt to promulgation.

Source:

Quarterly Statistics for the Tribunals Service, first quarter 2010-11

http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/quart-stats-tribunals.htm

and GAPS 2 reports

Young Offenders: Sentencing

Bill Esterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what guidance his Department issues on the balance between penalty and rehabilitation in the sentencing of *(a)* first-time, *(b)* repeat and *(c)* violent youth offenders. [30192]

Mr Blunt: Guidance on sentencing is provided by the Sentencing Council independently of Government. A sentencing guideline 'Over-arching Principles for Sentencing of Youths' was published on 20 November 2009 by the Sentencing Guidelines Council, the predecessor of the Sentencing Council.

The Government set out in legislation the sentencing framework and principles for sentencers to follow. Sentencers are required to have regard to the principal aim of youth justice, which is the prevention of offending by children and young people and to have regard to their welfare when sentencing any person aged under 18 years.

Most first time young offenders will receive an out of court disposal, if the offence is not serious. These can include restorative or reparative conditions.

Under the sentencing framework courts are required to impose a referral order for persons aged under 18 years who are appearing in court for the first time and plead guilty. The referral order is based on restorative justice principles and must include reparative and rehabilitative elements.

Repeat offenders may receive a youth rehabilitation order which has a range of both punitive and rehabilitative requirements that may be attached to the order as the court sees fit.

Custody is available for the most serious and violent offenders from whom the public must be protected. Custody is also available for persistent offenders where their offending is considered to be serious enough to warrant custody.

TRANSPORT

Aviation: Security

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will meet commercial pilots to discuss airline security and security searches for pilots. [28832]

Mrs Villiers: I met pilot representatives as part of a delegation from the Trade Union Congress on 16 November. A representative from BALPA was also present at the National Aviation Security Committee meeting on 30 November, which I chaired.

The Department for Transport has ongoing dialogue with industry partners to ensure that security measures are commensurate with the existing threat.

Bicycles: Safety

David Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will bring forward proposals to require the use of bells or other audible devices on bicycles; and if he will make a statement. [30616]

Mike Penning: Although there are no requirements to have or use a bell on a bicycle while it is in use, bells must by law be supplied with all new bicycles at the point of sale. In addition, rule 66 of the Highway Code recommends the fitting and use of cycle bells. Failure to observe any of the code's provisions may be used in evidence at legal proceedings.

We have no proposals for further legislation aimed at forcing cyclists to use a bell or other audible device.

Biofuels

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effects of price fluctuations in renewable transport fuel certificates on market stability for biodiesel producers. [30059]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport itself has made no direct assessment of the effects of price fluctuations on market stability for biodiesel producers.

However, the Renewable Fuels Agency is required to report annually to Parliament on the effects of the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO). The report on the year 2009-10 of the RFTO is due in January 2011. This report is expected to include data on trading of RTFCs and some assessment of the impacts of the RFTO on biofuel producers.

Biofuels: Cooking Oil

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government are taking to provide incentives for the use of used cooking oil as a transport biofuel. [30060]

Norman Baker: Under the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO), suppliers of fossil fuel for transport are required to ensure that a proportion of the fuel they supply is obtained from renewable sources. In both 2008-09 and 2009-10, the first two years of the scheme, approximately three per cent of the biofuel supplied was from recycled used cooking oil (UCO).

The rate of excise duty for biodiesel produced from UCO is 20 pence per litre less than the rate of duty for ultra low sulphur diesel. This 20 pence tax differential was introduced on 1 April 2010 and is set to run for a period of two years.

We are currently working to amend the RTFO to fulfil the requirements of the European Renewable Energy Directive (RED). The RED provides additional support for biofuels from waste, including UCO, by double counting the contribution they make towards national targets.

Blue Badge Scheme

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will amend the blue badge scheme to establish a fast-track application process for the issue of badges to those receiving urgent medical attention. [28500]

Norman Baker: Local authorities are responsible for the administration of the blue badge scheme and for ensuring that only residents satisfying one or more of the eligibility criteria prescribed in legislation are issued with a badge. The application processes adopted are for them to decide.

The Department for Transport's guidance states that local authorities may wish to consider having a fast-track application process for people who have a terminal illness that seriously limits their mobility, to make the final weeks of their life easier. However, there are no plans to require local authorities to establish a fast-track process for those receiving urgent medical attention.

Bridges: Tolls

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effect of the proposed increases in user tolls on the Severn Crossings on the date on which the debt incurred by the crossing concessionaire will be repaid. [27354]

Mike Penning: No decisions have been made regarding the future toll levels at the crossings once the concession expires.

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the likely effects on usage of the *(a)* Severn Crossing and *(b)* Dartford Crossing of proposed increases in user tolls in each year of the Comprehensive Spending Review period. [25603]

Mike Penning: Under the terms of the concession agreement the new rates are introduced on 1 January each year and increased in line with the retail price index (RPI).

The annual tolls cannot be set below the level of RPI increase without the concessionaire's agreement during the concession period.

In respect of the Dartford Crossing, the details of the proposed revised charging regime, including an assessment of its impacts on usage and economic effects, will be set out for public consultation.

The Department intends to begin the necessary consultation on such proposals around the end of 2010.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28364]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport undertook a major review of all of its budgets for discretionary expenditure during May and June 2010, following the reduction in the Department's budget announced in May 2010. Although no specific target was set to reduce expenditure on conferences, the review covered all categories of administrative expenditure including hospitality, training, marketing and communications.

The review process included a series of meetings with all senior budget managers in the departmental family to determine the scope for reductions and was supported by a number of messages from the permanent secretary to all staff on the need to bear down on non-essential expenditure.

Departmental Travel

Karl McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what cost-benefit analysis his Department has undertaken of the provision of *(a)* first and *(b)* standard class rail travel for its senior civil servants when travelling by rail in an official capacity on journeys of one hour or more; and whether he has assessed the type of work which such officials can undertake in each class of travel. [30225]

Norman Baker: No cost benefit analysis has been undertaken by the Department for Transport of the provision of first and standard class rail travel for its senior civil servants when travelling for official purposes, or the type of work which can be undertaken in each class of travel.

Senior civil servants are permitted to travel first class depending on business need and whether the additional expenditure is justified. Earlier this year the Department issued guidance to staff about reducing travel costs. Staff should use the cheapest means possible when travelling. If travelling by rail, standard class should be used unless, exceptionally, first class is cheaper. Rail tickets should also be bought in advance where possible to achieve the best deals.

Further reminders were issued emphasising the importance of information security when work is undertaken in public places, including when travelling by rail.

Driving Tests

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people failed a driving *(a)* theory and *(b)* practical test in (i) England and Wales, (ii) Leicestershire and (iii) Leicester East constituency in each of the last five years. [30452]

Mike Penning: The number of people who failed their practical driving test at test centres located in (i) England and Wales, (ii) Leicestershire and (iii) Leicester East constituency in each of the last five years are shown in the following table:

	England and Wales	*Leicestershire*	*Leicester East*[1]
2005-06			
Motorcycle	19,382	203	201
Car	542,593	10,610	3,019
Lorry	24,182	468	n/a
Bus	3,324	55	n/a
2006-07			
Motorcycle	17,998	167	167
Car	521,933	10,044	2,934
Lorry	20,865	395	n/a
Bus	2,738	44	n/a
2007-08			
Motorcycle	19,771	179	179
Car	521,671	10,625	2,866
Lorry	19,418	350	n/a
Bus	2,644	51	n/a
2008-09			
Motorcycle	24,131	266	159
Car	505,246	10,326	2,664
Lorry	17,626	349	n/a
Bus	2,633	49	n/a
2009-10			
Motorcycle	2,395	36	0
Motorcycle module 1	12,905	270	n/a
Motorcycle module 2	7,817	144	n/a
Car	457,770	8,668	1,911
Lorry	12,515	257	n/a
Bus	2,507	50	n/a

[1] Leicester (Gypsy Lane) DTC is the only test centre in the Leicester East constituency.

The requested theory test data can be provided only at disproportionate cost. The overall number of failed theory tests is shown in the following table:

All information is based on the location of test centres where the tests were taken, not where the candidates live.

Category	*England and Wales*			*Leicestershire*		
	Number test failed	*Total number test conducted*	*Fail rate (percentage)*	*Number test failed*	*Total number test conducted*	*Fail rate (percentage)*
2009-10						
Car	443,549	1,220,897	36.33	8,581	22,438	38.24
Motorcycle	9,645	50,408	19.13	136	730	18.63
Lorry/MC	4,693	23,031	20.38	76	377	20.16

Category	*England and Wales*			*Leicestershire*[1]		
	Number test failed	*Total number test conducted*	*Fail rate (percentage)*	*Number test failed*	*Total number test conducted*	*Fail rate (percentage)*
Lorry HPT	4,178	22,864	18.27	89	403	22.08
Bus MC	1,469	6,804	21.59	15	83	18.07
Bus HPT	1,256	6,678	18.81	24	92	26.09
2008-09						
Car	413,983	1,190,581	34.77	8,020	21,613	37.11
Motorcycle	19,337	95,048	20.34	276	1,288	21.43
Lorry	3,694	13,218	27.95	92	323	28.48
Lorry MC	3,953	18,764	21.07	80	343	23.32
Lorry HPT	3,285	18,539	17.72	56	325	17.23
Bus	1,074	3,480	30.86	14	57	24.56
Bus MC	957	4,188	22.85	7	43	16.28
Bus HPT	815	4,212	19.35	14	53	26.42
2007-08						
Car	467,571	1,343,710	34.80	10,122	25,996	38.94
Motorcycle	19,089	86,892	21.97	241	1,110	21.71
Lorry	10,200	37,298	27.35	226	757	29.85
Bus	2,562	8,247	31.07	41	94	43.62
2006-07						
Car	393,711	1,206,904	32.62	8,301	22,568	36.78
Motorcycle	11,098	66,401	16.71	144	829	17.37
Lorry	9,429	37,389	25.22	189	756	25.00
Bus	2,457	8,025	30.62	38	93	40.86
2005-06						
Car	357,756	1,181,636	30.28	7,561	22,061	34.27
Motorcycle	7,101	64,587	10.99	108	918	11.76
Lorry	9,847	41,309	23.84	261	823	31.71
Bus	2,677	8,739	30.63	32	93	34.41

[1] There is one theory test centre in Leicestershire: this is based in the Leicestershire South constituency. *Note:* Data for multiple choice and hazard perception sections of the lorry and bus tests was uncoupled in August 2008.

Driving Tests: Administration

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average time taken between the *(a)* initial application and *(b)* sitting of a driving (i) practical and (ii) theory test in (A) England and Wales, (B) Leicestershire and (C) Leicester East constituency was in each of the last five years. [30451]

Mike Penning: The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) measures waiting times for practical tests for Great Britain. The average waiting times in weeks for each of the last five years are shown in the following table:

Weeks

	Car	*Motorcycle*	*Lorry, bus and car with large trailer*
2005-06	6.0	3.9	4.5
2006-07	5.5	3.5	3.3
2007-08	6.4	3.7	3.2
2008-09	6.1	4.7	2.2
2009-10	6.6	2.5	2.4

For each individual test centre, DSA measures appointment availability, which reflects the first week where 10% of appointments are available to be booked. The following table shows the annual average appointment availability for each of the test centres in Leicestershire and the Leicester East constituency, in each of the last five years:

Driving Test Centre (DTC)	*Test Category*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Hinckley[1]	Car	6	7	8	7	8
	Motorcycle	5	3	4	1	n/a
Leicester (Gipsy Lane)[1]	Car	7	8	8	6	7
Leicester (Welford Road)	Car	8	8	9	8	9
Leicester Wigston	Car	8	10	7	4	n/a

Driving Test Centre (DTC)[2]	*Test Category*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
	Motorcycle	—		3	4	n/a
Wigston MPTC[3]	Car	—		3	7	9
	M1 Motorcycle	—	-	1	2	5
	M2 Motorcycle	—	—	1	1	2
Leicester LGV	Voc	5	5	4	2	2
Loughborough	Car	6	7	7	6	7
Melton Mowbray	Car	6	7	7	6	6

[1] Motorcycling tests at Hinckley DTC were relocated to Wigston MPTC in 2009

[2] Leicester (Gipsy Lane) is the only test centre in Leicester East constituency

[3] Leicester Wigston MPTC opened in 2009

DSA aims to give 95% of theory test candidates an appointment at their preferred test centre within two weeks of their preferred date. This is measured nationally (England, Scotland and Wales) and performance for each of the last five years is shown in the following table:

	Preferred date (waiting time) (percentage)
2005-06	98.42
2006-07	98.92
2007-08	98.53
2008-09	98.83
2009-10	98.31

Driving Tests: Motorcycles

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent progress his Department has made in its motorcycle riding licence and testing review; and if he will make a statement. [30474]

Mike Penning: We are making good progress working with stakeholders on reviewing the motorcycle test and I intend to make a statement shortly.

Fisheries

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has had recent discussions with his EU counterparts on days at sea restrictions for fishermen. [30168]

Mike Penning: No. This is a matter for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which is the lead Department on enforcement of the "days at sea" regime under the EU's cod recovery plan.

Fuels: Imports

Dr Thérèse Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which harbour authorities currently hold licences for the transfer of oil via ship to ship transfers. [30191]

Mike Penning: No oil transfer licences have been issued to harbour authorities so far, because the relevant legislation has not yet come into force.

International Civil Aviation Organisation: Taiwan

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had on progress towards Taiwan's participation in the International Civil Aviation Organisation; and if he will make a statement. [27399]

Mrs Villiers: Department for Transport officials and the UK Permanent Representative to the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) have received a number of representations from officials from Taiwan, on the issue of Taiwan's participation in ICAO. We and the EU encourage China and Taiwan to pursue pragmatic solutions to questions regarding the position of Taiwan with regard to specialised multilateral forums, including ICAO, especially where Taiwan's practical participation is important to EU and global interests.

London-South Wales Railway Line: Electrification

Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to announce his proposals for the electrification of the London to South Wales rail line. [29181]

Mrs Villiers: The Government will be in a position to make an announcement on further electrification of the Great Western Main Line in the new year, once the review of the Intercity Express programme is complete.

Parking: Roads

Gregg McClymont: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consideration he has given to the increased use of no parking zones on main roads as part of his Department's review of the response to cold weather conditions. [29748]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* The independent Winter Resilience Review recommended that every local highway authority have a robust winter service plan, and that this be consulted on and regularly reviewed in line with current best practice. It is for local highway authorities to decide on the nature and location of any parking restrictions in relation to the implementation of their winter plans.

Railways

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 15-18WS, on the Rail Industry Review, what *(a)* passenger and *(b)* trade union representation there will be on the high level working group to examine options for structural reform in the rail industry; [30230]

(2) which industry bodies will be represented on the high level working group to examine options for structural reform in the rail industry. [30231]

Mrs Villiers: No decisions on the composition of the Secretary of State's group, or the way in which industry and passenger interests will contribute to its work, have yet been taken. A further announcement about arrangements will be made shortly.

Railways: Franchises

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what arrangements are in place for the removal of rail franchises where rail passengers are dissatisfied with the service provided by their local rail operators; and if he will make a statement. [29085]

Mrs Villiers: Current franchise agreements include obligations for train operators to provide an acceptable benchmark level of service around train delays, cancellations and capacity. Continued failure to deliver these obligations can result in contract termination.

No similar obligation exists for passenger satisfaction, although the recent South Central contract includes obligations relating to passenger views on stations, trains and customer services where the operator is required to invest additional sums where targets are not met.

As part of our rail franchising reforms we are assessing how greater account of overall service quality, including passenger satisfaction, could be included within the contract.

Railways: Passengers

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will bring forward proposals to provide a statutory definition of overcrowding on rail passenger services; and if he will require train operating companies to take steps to reduce overcrowding on their services. [29642]

Mrs Villiers: There is an agreed rail industry measure for crowding which is used by train operators and the Department for monitoring purposes. We have no current plans to introduce a statutory definition of crowding. Franchise agreements generally include a requirement that train operators minimise crowding within the constraints of available rolling stock and relevant infrastructure. As part of our franchising reform, we are considering what additional or amended duties could be placed on train operators in relation to crowding.

Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation

Neil Parish: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with the *(a)* Chancellor of the Exchequer and *(b)* Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the forthcoming reform of the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation. [27794]

Norman Baker: I have corresponded with the Economic Secretary regarding possible amendments to the renewable transport fuels obligation (RTFO) to meet the requirements of the renewable energy and fuel quality directives.

Department for Transport officials hold regular meetings with officials in both the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Her Majesty's Treasury to discuss all aspects of biofuel policy, including the future of the RTFO.

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has set a timetable for future review of the renewable transport fuels obligation. [30058]

Norman Baker: The European renewable energy directive (RED) requires member states to source 10% of transport energy from renewable sources by 2020. We are currently considering options for achieving this target in the UK, and will consult shortly on proposals to amend the RTFO to meet the requirements of the RED.

The RED contains a requirement that the European Commission undertake a wide-ranging review of the directive by 31 December 2014 and propose amendments if appropriate. Any such proposal may lead to further revisions of the RTFO.

Roads: Accidents

Matthew Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 2 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 920W, if he will estimate the average number of *(a)* fatalities, *(b)* injuries and *(c)* personal injury road accidents per mile of the A1307 between the A143 Wratting Road, Haverhill junction and the A603 Lensfield Road, Cambridge junction in each year since 1996. [30251]

Mike Penning: The estimated rate of *(a)* fatalities, *(b)* injuries and *(c)* personal injury road accidents per mile on the 18 mile stretch of road on the A1307 between the A143 Wratting Road Haverhill junction and the A603 Lensfield Road Cambridge junction in each year since 1996 is given in the following table:

rate per mile

	Fatalities	*Injuries*[1]	*Accidents*
1996	0.17	5.06	3.28
1997	0.06	6.22	3.61
1998	0.11	5.61	3.11
1999	0.28	6.61	3.89
2000	0.06	5.83	3.67
2001	0.06	5.72	3.61
2002	0.22	5.00	3.22
2003	0.17	5.83	4.39
2004	0.06	7.00	4.44
2005	0.06	6.39	3.67
2006	0.17	6.33	3.89
2007	0.17	5.11	3.39
2008	0.33	5.72	4.11
2009	0.06	3.50	2.50

[1] Serious and slight injuries

Roads: Snow and Ice

Tom Blenkinsop: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the amount spent by the Highways Agency on *(a)* grit, *(b)* salt and *(c)* potash from (i) domestic and (ii) overseas producers in each of the last five years. [29149]

Mike Penning: Grit and potash are not used for routine winter service on Highways Agency roads, generally referred to as the strategic road network.

The Highways Agency's routine and winter service is delivered by its contracted service providers. The delivery of these services, including the purchase and application of salt, is paid for within lump sum payments covering a range of defined activities. The amount spent on the purchase of salt is not readily discernable from the service delivery lump sum payments and cannot therefore be provided.

Annual salt usage for the strategic road network varies greatly according to the weather experienced, typically ranging from 150,000 to 300,000 tonnes/annum, at an average cost of salt from domestic suppliers of approximately £25/tonne.

The 2009-10 winter season was the first time that significant supplies had been purchased from overseas suppliers. Detailed usage and cost information for each year is not available for the same reasons given for the purchase of salt from domestic suppliers.

Thameslink

Jonathan Reynolds: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the first cascaded rolling stock from Thameslink services to be in use by rail operating companies in Greater Manchester. [29765]

Mrs Villiers: Negotiations are continuing with the two remaining companies bidding to build and maintain a new fleet of trains for the Thameslink programme. It is expected that an order will be placed in autumn 2011 with the first train expected to enter passenger service in early 2015.

Existing trains will then be released for cascade to operate other services including in the North West of England.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Beachley Barrage

Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will make it his policy to implement Beachley barrage only. [30077]

Charles Hendry: The main conclusion from the Severn Tidal Power feasibility study, published on 18 October, was that the Government do not see a strategic case to bring forward a Severn Tidal Power scheme in the immediate term—see:

www.decc.gov.uk/severntidalpower

Another conclusion of the study was that the Beachley barrage is no longer considered feasible. The estimated cost of this option has risen substantially upon investigation over the course of the study, and its expected benefits (e.g. in terms of less environmental impact) are less than first supposed.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30750]

Gregory Barker: The Department has processed 9,246 invoices payable and 393 invoices receivable in the 12 month period from 1 December 2009 to 30 November 2010.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28852]

Gregory Barker: The Department of Energy and Climate Change was created on 3 October 2008.

(a) From 3 October 2008 to 31 March 2009 the Department spent £14,474.24 on employee claims for mileage allowance.

(b) In 2009-10 the Department spent £17,783.40.

Nuclear Energy: EU Plan

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what contribution his Department made to the European Commission's European Sustainable Nuclear Industrial Initiative Implementation Plan. [28636]

Charles Hendry: The EU's Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan is a key element of Europe's plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and for its move towards a sustainable, low carbon future. The European Sustainable Nuclear Industrial Initiative's prime objective is to develop a nuclear technology which will make the use of nuclear energy more sustainable, through more efficient use of uranium resources through recycling of plutonium, by the reduction of the radiotoxicity and reduction of the potential impact of the ultimate radioactive waste.

The Department has arranged for UK organisations, including the National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL), to contribute to the development of the Nuclear Industrial Initiative and to share UK knowledge and expertise as part of our active involvement in the EU's Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan. The NNL, with its wide range of nuclear skills and expertise, is well placed to represent both Government and wider UK nuclear industry interests and to identify potential opportunities as they arise.

Green Climate Fund

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change pursuant to the answer of 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 43, on climate change: developing countries, when he expects the Green Climate Fund to be *(a)* designed and *(b)* operational. [30185]

Charles Hendry: The UK aims for the Green Climate Fund's design process to begin following agreement to do so in Cancun, recognising that this will require a COP decision agreed by all parties. We hope then for the design process to make recommendations to COP17 at the end of 2011, which would include the timetable for the fund to become operational. The UK wants the fund to be well-designed and to become operational as quickly as practicable.

Mining: Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many former miners receive *(a)* concessionary coal and *(b)* payments in lieu of concessionary coal in Bassetlaw constituency. [29500]

Charles Hendry: There are currently a total of 3,598 concessionaires in the Bassetlaw constituency (based on beneficiaries' addresses in post codes DN10, DN11, DN22, S80, S81 and NG20) in receipt of either concessionary fuel or cash in lieu under the terms of the National Concessionary Fuel Scheme (NCFS) broken down as follows:

805 in receipt of concessionary fuel;

2,793 in receipt of cash in lieu.

Nuclear Power: Research

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (1) what assessment he has made of the effects of the carbon reduction commitment on nuclear fusion energy research; [29958]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effects of using a single year baseline to calculate the carbon reduction commitment on nuclear fusion energy research. [29959]

Charles Hendry: The Government have made no assessment of the effects of the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme, or using a single year baseline in the scheme, on nuclear fusion energy research. The purposes of the CRC scheme is to drive improvements in energy efficiency among large energy users. Government have not assessed the opportunities for energy efficiency savings in individual sub-sectors or organisations. A single baseline year was chosen in order to minimise administrative burden and to maintain simplicity and fairness through a common starting point for all organisations.

Renewable Energy

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps his Department is taking to reduce the administrative burden on those establishing community renewable energy projects. [28610]

Charles Hendry: My officials continue to engage with community groups and other organisations to identify any unnecessary administrative burdens associated with establishing a renewable energy project and to assess how they can be reduced.

The Environment Agency, for example, have been streamlining the permitting process for small hydro schemes, including a simplified application form and a named contact within the local area team.

The Department has also launched Community Energy Online, a web portal, to bring best practice and the best expertise to each community through the internet.

Renewable Energy: Feed-in Tariffs

Mr Robin Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what mechanism he plans to use to determine the technologies which are most cost-effective when refocusing feed-in-tariffs in 2014-15. [29562]

Charles Hendry: The first formal review of FITs will be the mechanism for determining how the efficiency of FITs can be improved to save £40 million in 2014-15. This will include consideration of the relative cost effectiveness of different technologies in helping to meet our challenging carbon reduction and renewable energy generation targets.

Renewable Energy: Heating

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what tariffs per kilowatt hour he proposes to be paid under the Renewable Heat Incentive. [29259]

Charles Hendry: We expect to be in a position to announce the details of the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme, including RHI tariffs and technologies supported shortly, and be open for business in 2011.

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change from what date renewable energy installations will be required to be commissioned in order to qualify for the Renewable Heat Incentive. [29260]

Charles Hendry: We expect to be in a position to announce the details of the scheme, including eligibility criteria for the installation commissioning date shortly, and be open for business from 2011.

River Severn: Tidal Power

Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will make an assessment of the merits of establishing the Severn Barrage Tidal Energy Scheme in 2015. [30016]

Charles Hendry: As part of the Government's announcement on the conclusions of the Severn Tidal Power feasibility study on 18 October, we said that it is not expected that a review will take place before 2015 at the earliest.

The timing of any review will depend on a number of factors, such as increased cost of alternative technologies or new national or international targets for renewable energy or security of supply are proposed. The Severn study report set out a list of potential triggers.

The outcome of the feasibility study does not preclude a privately financed scheme coming forward and my officials will liaise with such private sector consortiums about their ideas.

Shafag-Asiman Gas Field

Laura Sandys: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent reports he has received on the production sharing agreement on exploration and production rights in respect of the Shafag-Asiman gas field in Azerbaijan; and if he will make a statement. [29598]

Charles Hendry: On 7 October 2010, BP and SOCAR, the State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan, announced that they had signed a new Production Sharing Agreement on the joint exploration and development of the Shafag-Asiman structure in the Azerbaijan sector of the Caspian sea. Under the agreement, which is for 30 years, BP Exploration (Azerbaijan) Limited will be the operator with 50% interest, while SOCAR will hold the remaining 50%.

Sheffield Forgemasters

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what representations he has received on Sheffield Forgemasters since May 2010. [30237]

Charles Hendry: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State regularly receives representations on a wide variety of issues including this.

We have received letters from 12 private individuals and one private company on this issue. However, this does not include representations where Sheffield Forgemasters might have been just one of the issues raised in a letter. To search all the correspondence that might contain a representation on Sheffield Forgemasters would incur disproportionate cost.

We are aware of the concern expressed by parts of the industry regarding withdrawal of this conditional loan but the withdrawal of the loan is no reflection on the company, the project, its management or staff or of our commitment to taking forward the facilitative actions to remove unnecessary barriers to new nuclear in the UK. In these difficult times, tough decisions have had to be made across Government. This was just such a decision.

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change whether he has had discussions with Ministerial colleagues on nuclear industry issues in relation to Sheffield Forgemasters since May 2010. [30238]

Charles Hendry: Nuclear industry issues in relation to Sheffield Forgemasters were discussed with ministerial colleagues prior to the collective Government decision to not proceed with the loan to the company on grounds of affordability.

The withdrawal of the loan is no reflection on the company, the project, its management or staff or of our commitment to taking forward the facilitative actions to remove unnecessary barriers to new nuclear in the UK. In these difficult times, tough decisions have had to be made across Government. This was just such a decision.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Badgers: Bovine Tuberculosis

Gordon Birtwistle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress she has made on the development of a bovine TB vaccination for badgers. [28550]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 8 December 2010]*: Since 1999 DEFRA has invested over £11 million on research into badger vaccines. The first injectable badger vaccine was licensed in March 2010 and is available for use on prescription. It is being used in the Government funded badger vaccine deployment project, which began in July 2010, in an area in Gloucestershire.

The badger vaccines research programme is now focused on the development of an oral vaccine, as this is likely to be the most practical application of a vaccine to a wild population. The earliest projected date for a licensed oral badger vaccine is 2015.

We also aim to have a licensed BCG cattle vaccine and a validated differential diagnostic test by the end of 2012. However, due to the need to change EU legislation before cattle can be vaccinated for TB, we anticipate that a cattle vaccine could not be used in the field before 2015 at the earliest.

Biodiversity

Thomas Docherty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding her Department plans to provide for the protection of biodiversity and the natural environment overseas in the spending review period; and *(a)* through what departments and *(b)* by what means that funding will be disbursed. [30343]

Richard Benyon: The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs announced at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya that, following the spending review, DEFRA would be committing £100 million to be spent on forests in support of the REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation in developing countries) initiative, which will help to deliver biodiversity objectives.

The Darwin Initiative grant programme will continue to fund biodiversity projects in developing countries and UK Overseas Territories over the spending review period and the UK will not only sustain the existing level of funding, but increase it over this period. The fund will continue to be administered by DEFRA.

Thomas Docherty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for the level of her Department's funding for the Darwin Initiative in the spending review period. [30346]

Richard Benyon: The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs announced at the recent meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan, that the Government will not only sustain the existing level of funding for the Darwin Initiative, but now plans to increase it over the next four years. This will enable the initiative to carry out even more of its excellent work to deliver biodiversity and sustainable development objectives.

Thomas Docherty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has had discussions with the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on the role of her Department in supporting the protection of biodiversity overseas through the UK's diplomatic network. [30347]

Richard Benyon: Ministers have discussed the outcomes of the Convention on Biological Diversity meeting in Nagoya and how to take them forward, particularly on biodiversity, development and climate mitigation and adaptation, and in the context of wider international engagement.

With regards to the UK Overseas Territories I attended the recent meeting of the Overseas Territories Consultative Council with the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for North West Norfolk (Mr Bellingham). Moreover, DEFRA and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have been working closely together on the Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy, the Overseas Territories Environment Programme and the Darwin Initiative.

Biodiversity: International Co-operation

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what mechanism she has established for non-governmental organisations to contribute views on the priorities for the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services (IPBES); and whether she plans to establish a stakeholder forum for IPBES. [30110]

Richard Benyon: We expect the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services (IPBES) to consider arrangements to receive views on its priorities including from non-governmental organisations. Once these are agreed we will consider whether we need separate mechanisms in the UK to feed in views of non-governmental organisations beyond those established internationally.

Butterfly Conservation Society

Mr Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the Butterfly Conservation Society is contracted by *(a)* Natural England and *(b)* English Nature. [29818]

Richard Benyon: Natural England currently has a contract with Butterfly Conservation which funds action to conserve threatened butterflies and moths. English Nature formerly contracted Butterfly Conservation but ceased to exist in October 2006, when Natural England was formed.

Carbon Emissions

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the *(a)* Prime Minister and *(b)* Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change on the introduction of mandatory carbon reporting for businesses under section 85 of the Climate Change Act 2008. [28768]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 8 December 2010]*: The Secretary of State has not had discussions with the Prime Minister on this issue. The Under-Secretary of State, Lord Henley, has had discussions with the Minister of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change, the hon. Member for Bexhill and Battle (Gregory Barker) on the matter of corporate reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by businesses.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on the mandatory reporting of carbon dioxide emissions by companies registered in the UK. [29557]

Richard Benyon: I refer the hon. Member for Glasgow North East to the answer given to the hon. Member for Hartlepool (Mr Wright) on 27 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 319W.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department has spent on press cuttings services in each year since its creation. [28151]

Richard Benyon: DEFRA holds records for the cost of its press cuttings service from April 2003 to the present. Annual costs are set out in the following list.

DEFRA reviewed and rationalised its press cuttings service at the beginning of this year, resulting in significant cost savings, and the Department will continue to keep the service under review to ensure it represents good value for money.

	£
2010[1]	88,114.55
2009	167,459.24
2008	165,373.74
2007	151,936.73
2006	149,653.78
2005	94,543.74
2004	168,511.70
2003[2]	137,735.56

[1] January to November.
[2] April to December.

Departmental Sponsorship

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what expenditure *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [27517]

Richard Benyon: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent estimate she has made of the number of questions to her Department tabled in the *(a)* House of Commons and *(b)* House of Lords that remained unanswered after 10 working days as a result of observation of guidance on the timing of answers to similar questions tabled to more than one Department in the latest period for which figures are available. [28488]

Richard Benyon: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, my right hon. Friend the Member for Horsham (Mr Maude) on 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 184-85W.

In the case of questions that are deemed to be 'round robin', the Guide to Parliamentary Work, published by the Leader of the House of Commons states that Departments should not delay preparing an answer until 'round robin' advice is provided, and should not miss the target deadlines for this reason.

Guide to Parliamentary Work—Paragraph 7.21:

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/guide_to_parliamentary_work.pdf

Eagle Owls

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with representatives of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds on measures to control the spread of the eagle owl. [30201]

Richard Benyon: DEFRA officials have held discussions with key parties, including the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, which advocated a need for further evidence of impacts, and reinforcing messages to reduce further unlawful releases of eagle owls.

After considering all the facts on the threat that eagle owls pose to native wildlife have not been convinced that any immediate action is needed to control them. We will continue to monitor the effect they are having and will reassess the situation if necessary.

European Waste Framework Directive

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs by what date she expects each element of the revised European Waste Framework Directive to have been implemented. [29237]

Richard Benyon: The transposition and implementation of the revised Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) are devolved matters. I anticipate that regulations transposing the Directive in England will be laid before Parliament in January 2011. I understand that it is anticipated that transposing regulations will be laid before the Scottish Parliament later this month and the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly in January 2011. In each case the date of implementation of the transposing regulations is dependent on the conclusion of the respective parliamentary processes.

Flood Control: Minehead

Mr Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the Environment Agency spent on the new sea defences in Minehead in 2010-11; and what such expenditure is planned for 2011-12. [29734]

Richard Benyon: Minehead emergency works are scheduled to be completed by January 2011. The works involve placing 7000 tonnes of rock along a 130-metre length of coast, eastward from Warren Point towards Dunster Beach. The project will cost £500,000 and will reduce the flood risk to 688 properties in Minehead.

There is no expenditure planned on these defences for 2011-12.

Football: World Cup

Graham Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department spent on entertainment related to the activities of the 2010 FIFA World cup. [27369]

Richard Benyon: We have no central record of any expenditure relating to the 2010 FIFA World cup bid.

Hill Farming

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people have participated in the Upland Entry Level Scheme since its introduction. [29752]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* Uptake for Uplands Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) so far has been higher than expected. As of 7 December, there were 3,300 live agreements in place covering over 472,000 hectares of land in England's severely disadvantaged area (SDA). In total more than 3,900 applications have been received for the scheme, and Natural England are well on track to meet their target of 505,000 hectares of SDA land in uplands ELS agreements by March 2011.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people claimed hill farm allowance in each of the last 10 years. [29753]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* The first hill farm allowance payments were made in 2001 and continued until this year when it was replaced by Uplands Entry Level Stewardship. The following table provides a total of the number of applications received and the number of eligible claims paid.

	Total number of applications received	*Total number of eligible claims paid*
2001	13,492	1,0968
2002	11,357	9,996
2003	11,244	9,912
2004	11,060	9,859
2005	11,155	9,763
2006	11,687	11,011
2007	13,104	9,394
2008	9,539	6,996
2009	8,214	7,033
2010	7,826	7,009

Hunting

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has received on the *(a)* effectiveness and *(b)* operation of the Hunting Act 2004. [29825]

Mr Paice: The Government receive a high volume of correspondence about the Hunting Act 2004, much of which comments on the effectiveness and continuing operation of the Act. The Government have not, however, received any recent representations on these matters from organisations on either side of the hunting debate.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the *(a)* Prime Minister and *(b)* Deputy Prime Minister on her Department's plans to bring forward legislation to repeal the Hunting Act 2004. [29826]

Mr Paice: DEFRA Ministers have had no recent discussions with either the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister about the Hunting Act 2004.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to bring a bill before Parliament to repeal the Hunting Act 2004. [29827]

Mr Paice: There are many greater priorities facing the Government at the moment, but we have said that we will put forward a motion on the issue of hunting with dogs at an appropriate time.

Nappies: Waste Disposal

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate the cost to the public purse of disposing of disposable nappies in each of the last five years. [29236]

Richard Benyon: DEFRA does not hold this information in the form requested.

However, using data from the Environment Agency's 2006 report, An updated lifecycle assessment study for disposable and reusable nappies, and population estimates for England from the Office for National Statistics, the estimated cost of disposing of children's disposable nappies in England was approximately £19.1 million in 2009. This estimate does not include landfill tax.

Natural England

Mr Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what Natural England's policy is on common land in England; what common land at what locations Natural England has worked on in the last three years; and if she will make a statement. [29727]

Richard Benyon: There are 7,000 commons in England covering nearly 400,000 hectares. Natural England (NE) has a statutory role on virtually all commons. That is because the vast majority (88%) of the land carries national or international designations, and most commons are designated as access land under Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000. Because the distribution of common land is uneven, NE is especially involved in Cumbria (which has a third of all English common land), Yorkshire, the South West, the New Forest, and South East England.

NE has received Upland Entry Level Scheme applications for 125,000ha of common land in 2010—one third of all upland commons—and is currently supporting commoners and stakeholders in Cumbria, Bodmin Moor, and on Brendon Common (Exmoor), who are considering submitting a case to the Secretary of State for the establishment of Commons Councils under the Commons Act 2006.

Otters

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what factors her Department has identified for the increase in the number of otters in the UK in the last five years; and whether her Department has provided incentives to encourage an increase in the otter population. [30203]

Richard Benyon: The fifth otter survey published by the Environment Agency in October suggests that the welcome recovery in otter numbers is due to a combination of reduction in levels of toxic pesticides and the general improvements in water quality and consequent increase in fish stocks.

DEFRA has supported the Biodiversity Action Plan for otters which includes working with the Environment Agency and Natural England towards meeting water quality objectives on all rivers across England, so they can support healthy fish stocks and improve riparian habitat management. Such improvements will help biodiversity as a whole, improving the quality of habitat for many species, including the otter. In addition Natural England funds work under the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme which improves habitats for otters through general habitat management works and reducing pollution risks.

Poultry: Animal Welfare

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will accelerate her plans to introduce a ban on beak trimming for laying hens; and if she will make a statement. [29313]

Mr Paice: The removal of the ban is an interim solution. In the long-term we want to see a ban on routine beak trimming. The Government have taken heed of the strength of feeling on this issue during the consultation and since then and decided to adopt the Farm Animal Welfare Council's recommendation of setting a review date of 2015. We will assess the output of this work, with a view to banning routine beak trimming in 2016.

Research on how to reduce the risk of injurious pecking in flocks is ongoing and without the results of this work being available, it was appropriate to identify a provisional date to ban beak trimming rather than place a new date in the Regulations. The Beak Trimming Action Group will be tasked with developing an action plan to work towards a future ban on beak trimming. Conclusions from the research project and results from industry study tours will also be presented to the Group to consider.

Rights of Way: Applications

Mr Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding her Department provides to local authorities in order to enable them to fund rights of way applications; and if she will make a statement. [29723]

Richard Benyon: Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 all surveying authorities are required to ensure that all public rights of way in their area are recorded on the definitive map and statement (the local authority's legal record of public rights of way) as accurately as is reasonably practicable. Not all surveying authorities have completed this task and they therefore still receive applications to record public rights of way on the definitive map and statement. Local authorities are funded for this work through the unhypothecated Environment Protection and Cultural Services block in the revenue support grant.

Rights of Way: Fees and Charges

Mr Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on the power of local authorities to charge fees in relation to rights of way applications. [29722]

Richard Benyon: Applications for definitive map modification orders are primarily made in the public interest, in order to assist the local authority in its duty to keep the definitive map and statement (the local authority's legal record of public rights of way) as accurate as is reasonably practicable. Local authorities are funded for this work though the Revenue support grant. There is therefore no need, nor provision, to enable a local authority to recover any costs incurred in processing such an application. In the case of an application for a public path order there is provision for the local authority to recover some costs, as the applicant usually gains some benefit from the stopping up or diversion of a way.

Rural Areas

Thomas Docherty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made on the establishment of a Rural Communities Policy Unit in her Department; and if she will make a statement. [30348]

Richard Benyon: The new Rural Communities Policy Unit in DEFRA came in being on 1 December 2010, when 14 staff were formally transferred from the Commission for Rural Communities to join DEFRA'S existing rural team. A number of further posts will be filled by the end of January 2011.

Slaughterhouses: New Zealand

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has made representations to the government of New Zealand on the prohibition on the practice of shechita in New Zealand; what response was received; and if she will make a statement. [29798]

Mr Paice: No representations have been made to the Government of New Zealand on the prohibition on the practice of shechita in New Zealand. Decisions on such matters are for the New Zealand Government.

Timber: Imports

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs from which countries wood was imported for use as biomass in *(a)* 2007, *(b)* 2008 and *(c)* 2009; and how much wood each country supplied in each year. [29943]

Charles Hendry: I have been asked to reply.

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by the Minister of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change, my hon. Friend the Member for Bexhill and Battle (Gregory Barker) on 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 801-02W.

From April 2009, the renewables obligation required generators over 50 kilowatts to submit an annual sustainability report to Ofgem setting out the available information on their biomass feedstocks, including country of origin. Information for the first reporting period have been compiled by Ofgem and are available from their website at:

http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/Pages/MoreInformation.
aspx?docid=222&refer=Sustainability/Environment/
RenewablObl

Where data on import origin are available these indicate that there are seven countries reported to export wood to the UK, primarily in pellet form, as set out in the following table. The total tonnage of wood imported to the UK over the 2009-10 reporting period was 131,937 tonnes, over 90% of which came from Canada. In comparison, the UK supplied over 1.9 million tonnes wood. Figures are not available for previous years.

	2009
Reported country	*Reported tonnage*
France	4,865.1
Poland	3,597.1
Russia	188.2
Denmark and Sweden	2,634.5
Canada	119,531.4
USA	1,120.6
UK	1,965,512.7
Total tonnage reported	2,097,450

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Experiments

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the Government intends to measure its progress in implementing its commitment to reduce the number of animals used in scientific procedures. [30153]

Lynne Featherstone: We are currently developing a strategy to deliver the coalition commitment to work to reduce the use of animals in scientific procedures and will announce our plans in due course. We will be looking for genuine reductions which improve animal welfare and will avoid measures which simply drive work abroad to countries where lower standards or less stringent testing guidelines may apply.

It will be essential to ensure that the reporting of progress against the coalition commitment is based on careful and accurate analysis of the trends in animal use. We are considering what sorts of measures and evidence will be appropriate.

Arrest Warrants: Russia

Mr MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will take steps to resist implementation of the Russian Interpol arrest warrant for the British citizen William Browder; and if she will make a statement. [25264]

Nick Herbert: The implementation of an Interpol arrest warrant in the United Kingdom is an operational matter for the police; the Secretary of State for the Home Department has no involvement. In accordance with normal practice, we can neither confirm nor deny whether an arrest warrant for William Browder has been transmitted through Interpol. Where a person is arrested for extradition purposes, the Extradition Act 2003 sets out a number of safeguards which the courts and the Secretary of State must consider before extradition can be ordered.

Counter-terrorism: Finance

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans she has for the geographical distribution of the proposed reduction in the counter-terrorism budget. [28763]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* The Department does not publish its counter-terrorism budget by geographical distribution for reasons of national security. It has been the policy of successive governments not to reveal these details.

Crime: Statistics

Guy Opperman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms are in place to ensure the accuracy of crime statistics. [19743]

Nick Herbert: Home Office crime statistics are produced in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The code sets out the practices that are required to ensure the impartiality, objectivity and integrity of the statistics and the use of sound statistical methods.

If we are to improve confidence in crime statistics and drive effective action to tackle crime, the public must have more complete and independently produced information. We are currently reviewing how crime statistics should be collected and published in future, and will make further announcements in due course.

Crimes of Violence: Newham

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many recorded incidences of violent crimes occurred in *(a)* West Ham constituency and *(b)* the London borough of Newham in the last 12 months. [28916]

Nick Herbert: The latest available data refer to the period between July 2009 and June 2010, in which police recorded 7,507 violence against the person offences in the London borough of Newham. Information for the West Ham constituency is not held centrally.

Curfews

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in each police force area arrested during September 2010, but not charged when arrested, received curfews of 10 hours or more as a condition of police bail; how many such people had their police bail extended beyond four weeks without being charged, but with the curfew remaining in place; and how many such people subsequently charged or remaining on curfew had not been charged by the end of November 2010. [28313]

Nick Herbert: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Data on arrests reported to the Home Office do not separately include data on the direct outcome of arrests.

Cybercrime

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cyber attacks on the ICT infrastructure of Government departments have been detected in the last 12 months. [26701]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 25 November 2010]:* The Director of the Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ) recently estimated that over 20,000 malicious emails are detected on Government networks each month, 1,000 of which are deliberately targeting them. It would not be in the interests of UK national security to go into greater detail since such disclosure could assist attackers in undermining the integrity and security of departmental systems and thereby increase their exposure to potential threats.

Departments are required to have technical controls in place to protect their ICT systems from cyber threats. GCHQ, through its information assurance arm, CESG, and its Computer Emergency Response Team, GovCertUK, provides Government Departments with guidance on how to protect themselves against, detect, and mitigate various types of cyber attack, and acts as a single point for reporting Government network security incidents.

Dactyloscopic Data

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when she expects to sign the proposed agreement with Albania on exchange of dactyloscopic data. [29600]

James Brokenshire: The bilateral agreement relating to the exchange of criminal records information and fingerprint images is beneficial to both countries. It is expected to be signed by the UK and Albania at a mutually convenient date in the near future.

Demonstrations: Westminster

David Tredinnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions she has had with the Metropolitan police on the removal of encampments from pavements regularly used by pedestrians outside offices of Government Departments in Whitehall. [29351]

James Brokenshire: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary regularly discusses a range of policing issues with the Metropolitan Police Commissioner.

The Government have introduced measures in the Police Reform Social and Responsibility Bill to support rights to peaceful protest around Parliament while also tackling encampments and other disruptive activity on Parliament Square. The Government have also included a measure to provide local authorities with powers to seize and retain property in connection with any breach of relevant byelaws to cover similar nuisances taking place in areas beyond Parliament Square.

Demonstrations: Westminster

Conor Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* lecturers and *(b)* other employees of universities and colleges were arrested during the November 2010 demonstrations in Westminster; and which institution employs each such individual. [28510]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office does not hold this information.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps she has taken since her appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within her responsibility. [28359]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office constantly seeks to ensure that any conferences that it organises are both necessary and provide good value for money for the taxpayer.

We hold a database of venues belonging to Government Departments that we are able to access free of charge. Our in house team will always check for free venues and their availability and provide advice on alternatives. For larger events which the Government estate cannot accommodate we on occasion have to use external venues for which there is a charge. The procurement mechanism for this process has been developed to ensure that a free or low cost option is always sought first.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps her Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28110]

Nick Herbert: The Home Department is currently producing a plan in support of the Government's initiative on creating opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and third sector organisations. It builds from the Department's current ability to identify its SME community, which comprises 38% of the suppliers used and represents 9% of its supplier spend. This is complemented by the Department's good record of payment within five days.

The Department is actively contributing to the cross government agenda which is being led by the Efficiency Reform Group.

Departmental Courier Services

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average annual salary is of staff in the Mail Messenger Service in her Department's headquarters. [29677]

Nick Herbert: The average salary of civil servants employed in the Headquarters Mail Messenger Service in the Home Office is £19,800. Salaries paid to staff by the operator of the already outsourced element of this operation are not known as the cost is included in an overall service management charge.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if she will place in the Library a copy of her Department's Properties Group's business case for the outsourcing of the mail and messenger service; [29678]

(2) whether her Department's Properties Group has made a business case for retaining an in-house mail and messenger service. [29679]

Nick Herbert: The proposal to change from partial to full outsourcing of the Home Office Headquarters Mail and Messenger Service has not reached the business case stage.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether her Department has provided information to Anne's Gate Properties in respect of staff in her Department's mail messenger service; and if she will make a statement. [29680]

Nick Herbert: Mail and messenger staff information has been provided to Anne's Gate Property in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations and with Cabinet Office guidelines.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information her Department has provided to its trade unions side on staff in the Mail Messenger Service in the last six months; whether all information provided to private companies on such staff has been provided to the trade union side; and if she will make a statement. [29681]

Nick Herbert: There have been a number of meetings with the trade union side about the future of the mail and messenger staff. Information requested at such meetings and by written request has been provided to the trade union side as far as requirements for confidentiality permit.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what dates the Director and Head of Unit in her Department's properties group met her Department's Mail Messenger Service staff and their representative unions in the last six months. [29682]

Nick Herbert: Their managers have held eight meetings with the messenger staff, or the union that represents a proportion of them, since July 2010.

Departmental Databases

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of arrangements for data collection in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the non-departmental public bodies for which she is responsible. [29321]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The Code of Practice for Official Statistics, implementing the Statistics and Registration Act 2007, covers official statistics published by the Department and its non-departmental public bodies. The Home Office's 'Statement of compliance with Code of Practice for Official Statistics' is published on the Department's website at:

http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs10/ho-compliance-state-10.pdf

and states:

> "The Home Office is committed to regularly reviewing its National Statistics outputs. Our data collection, analysis and dissemination methods will continue to be reviewed regularly to identify ongoing opportunities for improvement
>
> In collecting, processing & publishing our statistics, we will endeavour to place the minimum burdens necessary on data providers. We consider the costs to data suppliers in developing new data requirements and review regularly the existing data requirements to ensure that they continue to be relevant."

The Department's Information Strategy was recently published within the draft Transparency section of the Department's Business Plan 2011-2015:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/corporate-publications/business-plan-2011-15/business-plan?view=Binary

Departmental Innovation

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what structures her Department has established to encourage innovation amongst its staff. [29213]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The Department values the ideas and suggestions of its staff in promoting improved service delivery to the public and value for money for the taxpayer. We operate a staff suggestion scheme in order to encourage staff to innovate and improve efficiency.

The Department has also launched a value for money toolkit to support policy makers, operational leaders, and business planners in developing innovations to help achieve more for less. Along with other Government Departments the Department also participated in the spending challenge which invited public sector workers and members of the public to suggest ideas on how the Government could save money and do more with less.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of her Department's expenditure on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28378]

Nick Herbert: It is not possible to identify expenditure on specific types of publications without incurring disproportionate cost. This would involve examination of a very large number of transactions across a range of accounting categories.

Energy Supply

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas supplied to her Department's offices at 2 Marsham Street in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [29673]

Nick Herbert: From available records the following table displays payments made on electricity and gas for 2 Marsham street since November 2009.

£

Month	*Gas*	*Electricity*
2009		
November	5,324.81	85,642.14
December	10,157.90	81,711.73
2010		
January	21,166.09	93,788.21
February	13,389.04	86,670.29
March	7,478.29	93,511.71
April	2,393.22	80,732.73
May	2,564.36	85,303.67
June	2,310.48	94,493.54
July	2,054.84	99,271.80
August	1,909.57	92,268.26
September	2,222.62	90,179.80
October	2,692.41	82,025.48
Total	73,663.63	1,065,599.36

Immigration: North East

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the likely effects of an immigration cap on businesses in *(a)* Sunderland, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* England. [29547]

Damian Green: The Migration Advisory Committee published a report in November on the limits on Tiers 1 and 2 of the Points Based System, including an assessment of economic, public service and social impacts.

The Government will also publish an impact assessment.

Industrial Disputes: Shrewsbury

Mr Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will publish the documents held by her Department relating to the 1972 Shrewsbury Picket dispute. [28876]

Nick Herbert: As departmental records approach 30 years of age, they are reviewed by the Home Office and agreement is reached with The National Archives (TNA) as to which are worthy of permanent preservation. Files on industrial action, and the regulation of strikes and picketing during the early 1970's, which have been selected, have been reviewed and transferred to TNA. Other relevant files have been examined but no records specific to the 1972 Shrewsbury Picket dispute have been identified. As the Department has no documents relating to this dispute there is nothing that can be published.

Information and Communications Technology: Recycling

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her policy is on the recycling and redeployment of new or nearly-new IT equipment which is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was purchased; and if she will make a statement. [28770]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 8 December 2010]:* The secure disposal or re-use of new or nearly-new IT equipment is dependant upon the level of protectively marked material or personal data stored on the system. As our IT equipment is generally managed under contract by our IT service providers, they will manage the re-use or disposal according to central government security policies. The Home Office has a general policy of sharing, re-use and commonality of IT capabilities, in order to increase efficiency, reduce costs, and improve environmental sustainability.

Internet

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she has made an estimate of the potential savings to the public purse which would arise from consumers of services provided by her Department accessing them via websites rather than face-to-face or by post. [28786]

Nick Herbert: Direct services are provided by Home Office agencies and many of these are already available online. Where there is potential for savings these are factored into the savings plans of relevant agencies. No overall estimate of the potential savings from moving further customer transactions online has therefore been made by the Department.

National Police Improvement Agency

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the likely effect on the role and functions of the National Police Improvement Agency of the structure proposed for the National Crime Agency. [29217]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* The Government announced their intention, in July 2010, to phase out the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) as part of wider policing reforms. Work is currently under way to review the functions performed by the agency and to determine, for those which it is necessary to continue to deliver, how best that might be done in the new policing landscape. Work is similarly underway on ensuring that the National Crime Agency (NCA) is structured so as to enable it most effectively to fight organised crime. While it may prove appropriate for some current NPIA functions to transfer to the NCA no final decisions have yet been made.

Offences against Children

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police forces have investigated allegations of child sexual abuse overseas in each of the last three years. [29218]

James Brokenshire *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* The investigation of allegations of child sexual abuse overseas is not distinguished from domestic investigations on police data systems, we are therefore unable to provide the information requested.

Passports

Bob Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations she has received on reintroducing passport renewal for a period of less than 10 years. [29633]

Damian Green: The period of validity of the UK passport is set in accordance with guidelines issued by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) which recommends a validity period of up to 10 years. We have considered the option of issuing a UK passport for periods of less than 10 years in response to correspondence and other enquiries generally by or on behalf of senior citizens. However, we have not adopted a shorter validity passport because it would incur similar costs to that of a 10-year passport.

Police: Accountability

Mr Hanson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the provisions of the Police (Amendment) Regulations 2004 in respect of membership of certain political organisations will apply to the proposed elected police commissioners. [29049]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* No. The Police (Amendment) Regulations 2004 refer to members of police forces, and police and crime commissioners will not be members of police forces.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will ask HM Inspectorate of Constabulary to conduct a risk assessment of her proposals for elected police and crime commissioners. [29358]

Nick Herbert: No. The role of HM Inspectorate of Constabulary is to monitor and report on forces and policing activity. It is for Parliament to scrutinise government policy.

Police: Crimes of Violence

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many serving staff in each police force have been investigated for *(a)* violent offences, *(b)* sex offences, *(c)* fraud offences and *(d)* offences of burglary, theft or robbery (i) before and (ii) during their employment; and what role each fulfils in each force; [28056]

(2) how many serving police officers in each police force were investigated for *(a)* violent offences, *(b)* sex offences, *(c)* offences of fraud and *(d)* offences of burglary, theft or robbery before their appointment. [28059]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office does not hold the information requested.

Police: Disciplinary Proceedings

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if she will estimate the cost to the public purse of legal fees for disciplinary hearings in *(a)* the Metropolitan Police Service and *(b)* Cambridgeshire Constabulary in each of the last three years; [29319]

(2) how many full-time staff worked on internal investigations in *(a)* the Metropolitan Police Service and *(b)* Cambridgeshire Constabulary in each of the last three years; and what the cost to the public purse was of such investigations in each such year. [29320]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* The conduct of internal investigations and staff disciplinary hearings are matters for the relevant police force and police authority. The Home Office has no role in these and does not hold the information requested.

Police: Information

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information her Department holds on the age profile of police officers in each police *(a)* force, *(b)* department, *(c)* squad, *(d)* assignment and *(e)* operation. [28024]

Nick Herbert: Figures are collected in the following age groups: 25 and under, 26 to 40, 41 to 55 and over 55. The latest available data are provided in the following table which shows the age group of police officers by police force as at 31 March 2010 (headcount).

Information on the age profile of police officers in each police department, squad, assignment and operation is not collected centrally.

Police officers in each police force by age group, as at 31 March 2010[1]

	25 and under	26 to 40	41 to 55	Over 55	Headcount Total
Avon and Somerset	113	1,720	1,519	25	3,377
Bedfordshire	108	662	480	15	1,265
Cambridgeshire	121	763	597	12	1,493
Cheshire	93	1,199	880	13	2,185
Cleveland	91	925	716	10	1,742
Cumbria	65	574	615	10	1,264
Derbyshire	129	1,029	936	16	2,110
Devon and Cornwall	94	1,737	1,770	31	3,632
Dorset	42	824	651	11	1,528
Durham	31	770	727	4	1,532
Dyfed-Powys	64	575	572	4	1,215
Essex	519	1,773	1,345	37	3,674
Gloucestershire	64	689	581	8	1,342
Greater Manchester	509	4,270	3,408	29	8,216
Gwent	52	787	618	9	1,466
Hampshire	129	2,088	1,586	27	3,830
Hertfordshire	194	1,226	740	17	2,177
Humberside	88	980	1,015	23	2,106
Kent	339	2,089	1,397	37	3,862
Lancashire	220	1,938	1,534	7	3,699
Leicestershire	141	1,220	972	18	2,351
Lincolnshire	83	562	565	8	1,218
London, City of	36	389	419	19	863
Merseyside	392	2,118	2,008	42	4,560
Metropolitan Police	2,263	17,528	13,623	406	33,820
Norfolk	113	856	720	11	1,700
Northamptonshire	101	692	574	10	1,377
Northumbria	215	2,119	1,885	12	4,231
North Wales	70	768	763	8	1,609
North Yorkshire	53	737	712	5	1,507
Nottinghamshire	143	1,265	1,023	20	2,451
South Wales	101	1,692	1,376	20	3,189
South Yorkshire	80	1,476	1,420	17	2,993
Staffordshire	57	1,137	991	18	2,203
Suffolk	54	652	562	9	1,277
Surrey	160	1,049	696	23	1,928
Sussex	298	1,793	1,171	23	3,285
Thames Valley	426	2,363	1,689	38	4,516
Warwickshire	32	489	456	8	985
West Mercia	111	1,165	1,126	22	2,424
West Midlands	686	4,883	3,135	61	8,765
West Yorkshire	365	3,114	2,337	40	5,856
Wiltshire	43	537	611	14	1,205
Total	9,088	75,222	60,521	1,197	146,028

[1] All figures are provisional, subject to change and have not been verified by forces.

Police: Manpower

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the likely change in the number of *(a)* police officers and *(b)* police community support officers in each year to 2015. [22141]

Nick Herbert: The estimate of the likely number of police officers and police community support officers in each year to 2015 is not available centrally.

We are determined to do what we can to strip out bureaucracy and unnecessary cost, driving efficiencies within and between forces. The frontline must be the last place to look for savings, not the first. That is why we have scrapped the policing pledge and the confidence target, and why we are determined to reduce the burden of central doctrine and guidance that imposes compliance costs and takes manpower away from the frontline.

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate her Department has made of the rate of turnover of *(a)* police community support officers and *(b)* police officers in (i) the Metropolitan Police Service and (ii) Cambridgeshire Constabulary in each of the last three years. [29318]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The latest available data are provided in the following table which shows the rate of turnover of police community support officers and police officers in Metropolitan Police Service and Cambridgeshire constabulary in each of the last three years. The rate of turnover is the number of leavers as a percentage of staff in post.

Rate of turnover[1] of police community support officers and police officers in Metropolitan Police Service and Cambridgeshire constabulary in the last three years[2, 3]

	Metropolitan Police Service						Cambridgeshire constabulary					
	PCSOs			Police officers			PCSOs			Police officers		
	Total no. of PCSOs[4]	Total no. of leavers[5]	Rate of turnover (%)	Total no. of police officers[4]	Total no. of leavers[5]	Rate of turnover (%)	Total no. of PCSOs[4]	Total no. of leavers[5]	Rate of turnover (%)	Total no. of police officers[4]	Total no. of leavers[5]	Rate of turnover (%)
2007-08	4,247	691	16.3	31,460	1,398	4.4	197	25	12.8	1,379	106	7.7
2008-09	4,594	558	12.1	32,610	1,428	4.4	195	36	18.3	1,450	97	6.7
2009-10	4,645	922	19.9	33,367	1,232	3.7	209	24	11.3	1,471	76	5.2

[1] The rate of turnover is the number of leavers as a percentage of staff in post. It is also described as the wastage rate.

[2] This table contains full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

[3] The total number of leavers includes transfers to other England and Wales forces but does not include officers leaving after a period of secondment.

[4] As at 31 March 2008 to 2010.

[5] Leavers include dismissals, voluntary resignations, medical retirements, normal retirements, transfers and death.

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what proportion of *(a)* police community support officers and *(b)* police officers in (i) the Metropolitan Police Service and (ii) Cambridgeshire Constabulary were assigned to light duties in each of the last three years. [29967]

Nick Herbert: Data are available on the number of police officers on recuperative and restricted duties. The following tables show the number and proportion of these officers in the Metropolitan Police Service and Cambridgeshire constabulary in each of the last three years.

Information on the number and proportion of police community support officers on light duties are not collected centrally.

Number and proportion of police officers on recuperative and restricted duties in the Metropolitan Police Service and Cambridgeshire constabulary in each of the last three years[1, 2, 3, 4]

	Metropolitan Police Service				
	Police officers				
		Recuperative duties[5]		Restricted duties[6]	
	Total number of police officers[7]	Number	Proportion (%)	Number	Proportion (%)
2007-08	31,871	1,078	3.4	1,042	3.3
2008-09	33,039	1,113	3.4	1,151	3.5
2009-10	33,820	1,273	3.8	1,122	3.3

	Cambridgeshire Constabulary				
	Police officers				
		Recuperative duties[5]		Restricted duties[6]	
	Total number of police officers[7]	Number	Proportion (%)	Number	Proportion (%)
2007-08	1,396	n/a	n/a	42	3.0
2008-09	1,469	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2009-10	1,493	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

n/a = The number of recuperative and restricted duties could not be provided by Cambridgeshire constabulary, except for 2007-08 restricted duties

[1] Proportion is calculated as the total number of recuperative duties divided by the total number of staff in post and the total number of restricted duties divided by the total number of staff in post.

[2] These tables contain headcount figures, rather than full-time equivalents.

[3] These data are provisional. They have not undergone usual quality assurance practices (including validation with individual police forces).

[4] Source: Home Office using data received from police forces via the Annual Data Requirement.

[5] Total number of police officers (head count) on 'recuperative' duties as at 31 March. These are temporary duties or working conditions approved to assist an officer's ultimate return to full duties after injury or illness by allowing them to return to or continue in work of a less demanding capacity.

[6] Total number of police officers (head count) on 'restricted' duties as at 31 March. These are duties or conditions approved, other than for recuperative purposes, for fixed periods totalling more than 28 consecutive days (including rest days) for an officer who is unable for a specific reason to carry out one or more aspects of full operational duty.

[7] As at 31 March 2008 to 2010.

Police: Newham

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evidence on population size her Department used to calculate the level of police precept for the London borough of Newham in the latest period for which figures are available. [28912]

Nick Herbert: The information requested is not held centrally as the setting of police precepts is a matter for individual police authorities.

Police: Northumbria

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding her Department has provided under each budget heading to Northumbria police force since 2000; and how much such funding her Department plans to provide in the Spending Review period. [28162]

Nick Herbert: The information requested for the year 2000-01 to 2010-11 is set out in the following tables.

Northumbria police: funding

£

	Revenue							
	Home Office police main grant	*Crime fighting fund*	*Basic command unit fund*	*Police community support office grant*	*Neighbourhood policing fund*	*Forensic (DNA expansion) grant*	*Special priority payment*	*Rule 2 grant (includes the former Forensic DNA grant and special priority payment)*
2000-01	109,719,591	837,334				413,744		
2001-02	113,786,288	2,998,000				1,303,972		
2002-03	113,187,850	5,716,000				1,176,794		
2003-04	123,558,391	6,752,402	1,350,580	330,398		1,237,670	1,186,429	
2004-05	124,859,764	7,271,104	1,350,580	861,854		1,229,131	1,652,794	
2005-06[1]	130,420,176	7,271,104	1,350,580	2,097,858		979,952	2,124,245	
2006-07[2]	105,706,944	7,271,104	1,350,580	941,008	5,267,840			3,055,217
2007-08[3, 4]	107,608,914	7,271,104	1,350,580	969,000	7,319,000			3,055,217
2008-09[5]	108,833,223	7,271,104	1,080,464	8,512,136				3,543,585
2009-10	111,322,014	7,271,104	1,080,464	8,741,964				3,543,585
2010-11[6]	113,874,660	7,271,104	1,080,464	8,977,997				49,871

£

	Capital grant	Capital Airwave	Premises improvement fund	Pensions top-up grant[7]
2000-01	2,844,000			
2001-02	3,622,000	8,134,000		
2002-03	1,414,100		500,000	
2003-04	1,540,500	635,000	350,000	
2004-05	6,642,000	372,000		
2005-06[1]	5,972,000	739,000		
2006-07[2]	5,596,160			10,630,000
2007-08[3, 4]	6,246,000			11,650,000
2008-09[5]	6,082,000			12,817,000
2009-10	6,082,000			19,933,682
2010-11[6]	5,778,199			

[1] Includes amendments made under the Home Office Police Grant Report Amending Report for changes to census 2001 population data.

[2] NPF figure includes Northumbria's share of the £91 million announced in the 2006 Budget.

[3] Capital figure includes the increased capital allocations announced on 24 May and 19 June 2007.

[4] Police main grant has been adjusted for comparison purposes with 2008-09 to take account of a change in funding for dealing with stray dogs

[5] Rule 2 grant includes for the first time the former specific grant Initial Police Learning and Development Programme

[6] Takes account in-year reductions in July 2010.

[7] In 2006-07, the way police pensions were funded changed and the pensions top-up grant was introduced, a more detailed explanation of this can be found at:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/police-finance/

As a result, the size of police main grant before the introduction of the pensions top-up grant is not directly comparable with the size of police main grant after the introduction of the pensions top-up grant.

Note

Funding for counter-terrorism is not included in the table for security purposes

Detail on 2011-12 funding allocations for individual forces, including Northumbria, will be announced shortly when the provisional police settlements will be placed before the House of Commons.

Police: Offenders

Andrew Stephenson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 508W, on police: offenders, if she will bring forward proposals to record the number of police officers convicted of a criminal offence. [28452]

Nick Herbert: I have no plans to bring forward such proposals.

Police: Pensions

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police authorities have indicated to her Department that they may implement Regulation A19 of the Police Pensions Regulations 1987 in the last three months. [29474]

Nick Herbert: The Government have no role to play in any exercise of this power by police authorities, and there is no requirement on them to inform the Government whether they may use it. The Department is in regular discussion with members of police authorities on the range of issues and challenges that are facing the police.

Police: Public Expenditure

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate her Department has made of the change in the number of front-line *(a)* police community support officers and *(b)* police officers in Northumbria in the comprehensive spending review period. [29549]

Nick Herbert: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary will place the Government's proposed allocations for individual forces before Parliament in December.

My right hon. Friend has been clear that the police service must play its part in reducing the deficit. Decisions about the number of police officers, police community support officers and other police staff engaged by the Northumbria police and how they are deployed are matters for the chief constable and the police authority.

Police: President of Sri Lanka

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* police and *(b)* police community support officers were deployed for the recent visit of the President of Sri Lanka; and what the cost to the police service was of policing the visit. [30082]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office does not hold this information but we understand from the police that approximately 800 officers were deployed across the Metropolitan Police area for the visit.

Police: Vacancies

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many vacancies there have been for *(a)* police community support officers and *(b)* police officers in (i) the Metropolitan Police Service and (ii) Cambridgeshire Constabulary in each of the last three years. [29588]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 9 December 2010]*: This information is not collected centrally by the Home Office. The recruitment of police community support officers and police officers is a matter for the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, the chief constable of Cambridgeshire constabulary, and their respective police authorities

Police: West Midlands

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the effects of reductions in funding for the West Midlands Police Force on *(a)* police officer numbers, *(b)* civilian support staff numbers and *(c)* future officer recruitment. [22782]

Nick Herbert: I have today announced provisional funding allocations for individual police forces, including the West Midlands police.

Decisions on the number of each are for chief constables and police authorities, but we are determined to do what we can to strip out bureaucracy and unnecessary cost, driving efficiencies within and between forces. The front-line must be the last place to look for savings, not the first. That is why we have scrapped the Policing Pledge and the confidence target, and why we are determined to reduce the burden of central doctrine and guidance that imposes compliance costs and takes manpower away from the front-line.

Chief constables and police authorities are best placed to plan the work force mix of police officers, police support staff and police community support officers that is most suited to achieving the highest quality of service in their area.

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding her Department allocated to the Police Service in the West Midlands in 2009-10; and what estimate she has made of the likely level of funding in *(a)* 2010-11, *(b)* 2011-12, *(c)* 2012-13 and *(d)* 2013-14. [27935]

Nick Herbert: The information requested for years 2009-10 and 2010-11 is set out in the following table.

Detail on funding allocations for 2011-12 to 2014-15 for individual forces, including west midlands, will be announced shortly when the provisional police settlements will be placed before the House of Commons.

West midlands Government grants

	£ million
2009-10	[1]540.9
2010-11	[2,3]552.0

[1,2] Government grants comprise: Home Office Police Grant, Department for Communities and Local Government Revenue Support Grant, and National Non-Domestic Rates; Crime Fighting Fund; Basic Command Unit Fund; Neighbourhood Policing Fund; Rule two Grant; Capital Grant. Excludes Counter Terrorism Funding.

[3] Takes account of in-year reductions in July 2010.

Public Order

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many protest groups are recorded on the database of the National Public Order Intelligence Unit; and if she will make a statement. [26591]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 25 November 2010]*: The Home Office does not hold this information.

Terrorism

Mr Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 18 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 938-39W, on terrorism, on how many occasions Lord Carlile of Berriew was consulted by those working on her Department's review of counter-terrorism legislation prior to 18 November 2010. [27757]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 1 December 2010]*: Lord Carlile has been consulted by Ministers and officials on the review of counter terrorism and security measures on an ongoing basis since the review was announced in July.

As set out in the statement made by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 13 July 2010, *Official Report*, columns 797-809, the review is being conducted by the Home Office and proposals made by Lord Carlile QC will be fully considered as part of the review.

Terrorism: Public Expenditure

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the potential effect of the outcomes of the comprehensive spending review on the number of posts relating to counter terrorism in her Department. [29077]

Nick Herbert: The Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) will reduce administrative expenditure as part of the Government's target to reduce the cost of Whitehall by one third over the period of the comprehensive spending review. We will ensure that the UK retains full capabilities to tackle the terrorist threat.

Theft: Gold

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offences in which gold was *(a)* stolen and *(b)* unlawfully traded through cash for gold shops were reported in each of the last five years. [29554]

James Brokenshire: The information requested is not available centrally. It is not possible to determine such offences from the police recorded crime statistics collected by the Home Office.

Visas: Students

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people entering the UK under the student visa programme enrolled to study for a period of less than three months in the latest period for which figures are available. [29820]

Damian Green: Non-EEA nationals intending to study in the UK may enter as student visitors, providing their course of study does not exceed six months, or as students under Tier 4 of the points based system. In either case, information about the length of the course of study is not recorded centrally. The information requested could therefore be produced only by checking individual records at disproportionate cost.

Visas: Applications

Harriett Baldwin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of visa applications were *(a)* rejected on initial application and *(b)* allowed in each category of appeal following initial rejection in the latest period for which figures are available. [29654]

Damian Green: In calendar year 2009, 18% of initial applications were rejected.

In the same calendar year 33% of all appeals received were allowed. In the family visit category 36% of appeals were allowed. In the settlement category 37% of appeals were allowed. For other entry clearance appeals 25% were allowed.

CABINET OFFICE

Business: Closures

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many *(a)* light industrial and *(b)* manufacturing businesses in Sussex ceased trading in each year since 2005. [30487]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning how many (a) light industrial and (b) manufacturing businesses in Sussex closed in each year since 2005. [30487]

Annual statistics on the number of enterprise births and survivals are available from the ONS release on Business Demography at:

www.statistics.gov.uk

However, the standard industrial classification (SIC07) contains no definition for "light industrial" enterprises. The table below contains the latest statistics available, which show enterprise deaths for East and West Sussex in the Manufacturing industry.

Business deaths in East and West Sussex for manufacturing

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
East Sussex	145	115	140	85	130
West Sussex	230	185	190	160	200

Corruption: EU Law

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 783W, on corruption: EU law, what guidance is provided to *(a)* Government Departments, *(b)* business organisations and *(c)* other contracting authorities to enable them to establish whether an economic operator should be treated as ineligible during the tendering procedure because it has been convicted of the offence of bribery. [29522]

Mr Maude: The Efficiency and Reform Group within the Cabinet Office has issued "Guidance on the Mandatory Exclusion of Economic Operators" to help Government Departments, business organisations and other contracting authorities to establish whether an economic operator should be treated as ineligible during the tendering procedure because it has been convicted of the offence of bribery, which is available at:

www.ogc.gov.uk/procurement_policy_and_application_of_eu_rules_guidance_on_the_uk_regulations.asp

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences by *(a)* the Prime Minister's Office and *(b)* his Department. [28368]

Mr Maude: The Government have implemented a Government-wide freeze on marketing and advertising as part of their plans to tackle the deficit. The marketing and advertising freeze includes conferences and has already delivered savings of £27 million in central Government by September 2010.

The Cabinet Office, which the Prime Minister's Office is part of, does not hold conferences as such. We have, however, taken steps to ensure minimum costs on all events. The regional Cabinet meeting held in Bradford in July 2010 was £3,029.50, a considerable reduction on past regional Cabinet meetings which have cost between £50,000 and £100,000.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working in the private office of *(a)* the Prime Minister and *(b)* the ministerial head of his Department in each of the last five years. [28572]

Mr Maude: The figures for spend on overtime for staff working in the private offices of the Prime Minister and the Minister for the Cabinet Office for the last five years are given in the following table.

Financial year	£
2009-10	47,659
2008-09	47,861
2007-08	37,815
2006-07	14,309
2005-06	5,168

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what estimate he has made of the expenditure of *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Prime Minister's Office on printing (a) Command Papers, (b) papers laid before Parliament by Act, (c) consultation documents and (d) other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28388]

Mr Hurd: The information requested is available only at disproportionate cost.

Foreign Workers: EU Nationals

John Mann: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many EU nationals have entered the UK for the purposes of employment since 6 May 2010. [29503]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics (ONS), I have been asked to respond to your question concerning how many EU nationals have entered the UK for the purpose of employment since 6 May 2010. [29503]

The Office for National Statistics produces estimates of long-term international migration, primarily based on the International Passenger Survey. Our latest provisional estimates, for the year to March 2010, were published on 25 November 2010. We are unable to answer the above question because estimates are not yet available for the time period stated.

Government Departments: Computer Networks

Harriett Baldwin: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether an examination of the cost of Government-secured intranet communication links formed part of the Government's efficiency savings programme. [29786]

Mr Maude: Government secured intranet (gsi) and its cost has been discussed in the course of the Government's ongoing efficiency savings programme.

Government Departments: Procurement

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what proportion of Government contracts were awarded to small and medium-sized enterprises in the financial year 2009-10. [22870]

Mr Maude: The previous Government did not keep records of SME expenditure therefore the figures are not immediately available. We hope to properly collate these data and publish them before the end of the year.

Heroin: Deaths

John Mann: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many heroin addicts died of an overdose in each of the last three years. [29652]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many heroin addicts died of an overdose in each of the last three years. (29652)

The table attached provides the number of deaths where the underlying cause was drug poisoning and heroin/morphine was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate, either alone or together with other substances, in England and Wales, from 2007 to 2009 (the latest year available).

Heroin (diamorphine) and morphine are counted together because the former breaks down in the body into morphine and, consequently the latter may be the substance detected at post mortem and recorded on the death certificate.

It is not possible to determine from the information collected at death registration whether the deceased was an addict or regular user of a specific category of drugs, since this information is not routinely recorded. Where more than one drug is mentioned on the death certificate, it is not always possible to tell which of them was primarily responsible for the death.

The number of deaths related to drug poisoning registered in England and Wales each year by sex, age, cause and specific substance are published annually on the National Statistics website at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=11695

Table 1 Number of deaths attributed to drug poisoning[1] where heroin/morphine was mentioned on the death certificate either alone or with other substances, England and Wales[2], 2007 to 2009[3]

	heroin/ morphine only	*heroin/morphine with other substances*	*Total mentions of heroin/ morphine*
2007	588	241	829
2008	587	310	897
2009	562	318	880

[1] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10). Deaths were included where the underlying cause was due to drug poisoning (shown below) and where heroin/morphine was mentioned on the death certificate.

ICD-10 Description

F11-F16, F18-F19 Mental and behavioural disorders due to drug use (excluding alcohol and tobacco)

X40-X44 Accidental poisoning by drugs, medicaments and biological substances

X60-X64 Intentional self-poisoning by drugs, medicaments and biological substances

X85 Assault by drugs, medicaments and biological substances

Y10-Y14 Poisoning by drugs, medicaments and biological substances, undetermined intent

[2] Figures for England and Wales include deaths of non-residents.

[3] Figures are for deaths registered in each calendar year.

House of Lords: Written Questions

Mr Amess: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) within what period after the date of tabling he expects his Department to circulate guidance to Departments in respect of round robin questions tabled in the House of Lords; under what circumstances guidance is not produced in respect of round robin questions; and if he will make a statement; [29835]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of round robin questions to the Government tabled in the House of Lords which have been answered without *(a)* waiting for and *(b)* utilising round robin guidance; and if he will make a statement. [29836]

Mr Maude: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 884W.

No estimate has been made of the number of round robin questions answered without waiting for guidance.

Ministers: Photography

Mr Winnick: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the full duties are of the Cabinet Office employee who has been engaged to photograph Ministers. [23209]

Mr Maude: As of 11 November, his role is to take photographs of Ministers at official Government events and meetings for use across web, print and other media. He is a resource that can be used by all Government Departments. He has subsequently left the Department.

Pensioners: Age

Mr Laws: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many pensioners are aged *(a)* 60 to 64, *(b)* 65 to 69, *(c)* 70 to 74, *(d)* 75 to 79, *(e)* 80 to 84 and *(f)* 85 years or more. [30040]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your question asking how many pensioners are aged (a) 60 to 64, (b) 65 to 69, (c) 70 to 74, (d) 75 to 79, (e) 80 to 84 and (f) 85 years or more (30040).

ONS does not produce estimates of the number of individuals receiving pensions.

However the attached table shows the number of people in the specified age groups resident in the UK in mid-2009. This is the latest year for which population estimates are available.

Population estimate by selected age groups in the United Kingdom in mid-2009

Thousand

	60-64	*65-69*	*70-74*	*75-79*	*80-84*	*85+*
United Kingdom	3,719.1	2,837.1	2,441.6	1,989.3	1,468.5	1,369.3

Source:

Office for National Statistics, General Register Office for Scotland, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

TREASURY

Bank Services

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many de novo banks have applied for authorisation, excluding change of control or variations of permission, since 2005; how many such banks received that authorisation; on average what the time taken was between an initial application and an authorisation; how many such banks are in the application process; on average how long such banks have been awaiting an authorisation decision; how many such banks received Minded to Authorise letters; and on average what the time taken was between the making of an initial application and the issuing of a Minded to Authorise letter. [27788]

Mr Hoban: The matter concerned is the responsibility of the Financial Services Authority (FSA), whose day-to-day operations are independent from government control and influence. I have asked the FSA to write to the hon. Member on the issue he raises.

Banks: Regulation

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many visits *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have made to Brussels to discuss European banking regulation since 6 May 2010. [29506]

Mr Hoban: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has been to Brussels five times and I have been to Brussels twice to discuss, among other things, banking regulation.

Child Benefit

Mr Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in respect of how many children aged *(a)* four years and under, *(b)* between five and nine years, *(c)* between 10 and 16 years and *(d)* over 16 years child benefit payments were being made on the latest date for which figures are available. [30051]

Mr Gauke: The latest information on the ages of children for whom Child Benefit is being received is available in the HMRC snapshot publication "Child Benefit Statistics Geographical Analysis, August 2009". This can be found at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/child_benefit/chb-geog-aug09.pdf

Child Benefit: Bolton

Mr Crausby: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the number of households in Bolton North East constituency in receipt of child benefit who will no longer receive it as a result of his proposed changes. [29597]

Mr Gauke: Information on household income for child benefit claimants is not available at parliamentary constituency level.

Construction: Capital Investment

Simon Kirby: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received from representatives of the construction industry on access to development capital; and if he will make a statement. [29317]

Danny Alexander: Treasury Ministers and officials receive representations from a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such representations.

Departmental Manpower

Jesse Norman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the ages are of the 10 most senior members of staff in his Department. [25744]

Mr Gauke: The most senior staff in HM Treasury are the eight managing directors, including the permanent secretary and the second permanent secretary. Their ages are: 51, 41, 41, 52, 46, 61, 55 and 55 years. It is not possible to identify the official who is the next most senior.

Departmental Telephone Services

Angela Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the saving was to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* HM Revenue and Customs through the use of non-geographical telephone numbers in the financial year (i) 2008-09 and (ii) 2009-10; and what the estimated saving is for 2010-11. [29340]

Mr Gauke: The Treasury has two non-geographical telephone lines, which are provided to help staff who work remotely or who need to access business continuity information in the event of an emergency.

Between 90 and 95% of customer telephone calls to HMRC are managed through the Department's centralised contact centre network. The Department receives no revenue through that network's use of non-geographical numbers. HMRC is aware that the cost of calling its helplines can be an issue for some of its customers. HMRC is in the process of carrying out an in depth review of its telephone numbering strategy, looking at ways to reduce the costs to customers while balancing the costs to HMRC and the performance of its contact centre network.

The information on savings is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Equitable Life Assurance Society: Compensation

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he last met representatives of the Equitable Members Action Group. [30234]

Mr Hoban: I have met with representative of the Equitable Members Action Group a number of times over the last few months, including prior to the spending review announcement in order to discuss their representation.

I have also been informed the representatives of the Equitable Members Action Group have met with the Independent Commission on Equitable Life Payments to provide their views on allocation of the payments.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps his Department is taking to ensure the provision of compensation for Equitable Life policyholders. [30239]

Mr Hoban: The Government have announced that £1.5 billion will be made available for the Equitable Life Payments Scheme. This includes covering the full cost of losses to with-profits annuitants who purchased their policies after 1 September 1992.

The Independent Commission on Equitable Life Payments, which was established in July, will advise the Government on the allocation of payments among all policyholders, with the exception of with-profits annuitants. It is expected to submit its report in January 2011, so that the Government can meet their ambition of making first payments in the middle of next year.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money his Department set aside to compensate Equitable Life policyholders. [30240]

Mr Hoban: The Government have announced that £1.5 billion will be made available for the Equitable Life Payments Scheme. This includes covering the full cost of losses to With-Profits Annuitants who purchased their policies after 1 September 1992.

Excise Duties: Liquefied Petroleum Gas

Katy Clark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will bring forward proposals to maintain the duty differential for liquefied petroleum gas beyond 2015. [27211]

Justine Greening: The Chancellor keeps all taxes under review and decisions about tax policy are made in the round alongside all other priorities. This includes excise duty rates on road fuels.

Financial Services: Education

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will encourage banks in receipt of public funds to provide financial support to programmes that promote *(a)* a savings culture and *(b)* financial capability amongst young people. [29638]

Mr Hoban: The Consumer Financial Education Body (CFEB) was set up in April 2010 to improve understanding of financial matters among the general public and to enhance the ability of members of the public to manage their financial affairs. CFEB is funded by a levy on financial services firms, which includes banks in receipt of public funds.

The Government are committed to creating conditions for higher levels of saving. They have asked CFEB to develop a financial health check, which will encourage people to take action across all aspects of their finances, including saving. The new service will launch in spring 2011.

The Government recognise that some financial services firms support financial capability teaching in schools, helping to raise levels of financial capability among young people. Those banks who participated in the Bank Recapitalisation Fund agreed under the terms of their recapitalisations to support the expansion of financial capability.

Football: World Cup

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the Barnett consequential was for *(a)* Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Northern Ireland of expenditure on Government support for the Football Association's bid to host the FIFA World Cup in 2018. [29240]

Danny Alexander: No additional allocations were made to Government Departments in respect of the Football Association's bid to host the FIFA World Cup in 2018, therefore any spending was from within existing CSR 2007 allocations. Those allocations would have attracted Barnett consequentials in the normal way.

Impact Assessments

Jo Swinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the merits of introducing inequality impact assessments on *(a)* tax rises and *(b)* public expenditure reductions; and if he will make a statement. [28582]

Justine Greening *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: The Treasury made a qualitative assessment of the likely impact of the spending review on different groups using the information that is currently available, and these assessments were considered when decisions were made. The Treasury published the document, "Overview of the Impact of Spending Review 2010 on Equalities" alongside the spending review announcement.

The role of the Treasury in making decisions about public expenditure is to allocate resources to Departments. It is then up to Departments to decide how best to manage these resources. All Departments will consider the equalities impacts of the decisions made as a result of public expenditure reductions and make further assessments, in line with their legal obligations.

Over the summer, HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs have worked with interested parties to develop the tax impact assessment, and in doing so have been mindful of the statutory duties on public bodies. The Government published their response to the consultation on 9 December, setting out the Government's plans for improving impact analysis for tax measures.

Income Tax

Mr Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue was collected in higher rate income tax levied at *(a)* 40% and *(b)* 50% in the latest period for which figures are available. [29988]

Mr Gauke: Projections of income tax liabilities at the higher and additional rates of tax in 2010-11 are published on the HMRC website in table 2.6:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/income_tax/table2-6.pdf

Members: Correspondence

Stephen Phillips: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he plans to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Sleaford and North Hykeham of 5 October 2010 undertaken by his Department to be answered on 28 October 2010. [24414]

Justine Greening: I have replied to the hon. Member.

Redundancy

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish his estimate of the number of public and private sector job reductions in *(a)* Houghton and Sunderland South constituency, *(b)* Sunderland, *(c)* the North East of England and *(d)* England between 2010 and 2015. [29551]

Danny Alexander: The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) was formed in May 2010 to make an independent assessment of the public finances and the economy.

On 29 November 2010, the OBR released the official forecast for total employment and general Government employment, updated for the spending review announcements.

As the OBR sets out in paragraph 3.98, page 62 of its "November 2010 Economic and fiscal outlook" (Cm 7979), it expects total employment to rise by 1.1 million over the next five years, from 29.0 million in 2010 to 30.1 million in 2015. General Government employment is projected to fall by just over 400,000 between 2010-11 and 2015-16, more than offset by a rise in market sector employment of around 1.5 million.

The OBR has not published forecasts on a sub-national level.

Revenue and Customs: Finance

Owen Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any HM Revenue and Customs unit will receive a net decrease in funding in 2011-12 compared to 2010-11 and previous years as a result of the outcome of the spending review. [29360]

Mr Gauke: Over the course of the spending review period HMRC will make savings of 25%, of which it will reinvest £900 million to tackle avoidance, evasion and fraud to bring in additional revenues of £7 billion a year by 2015.

HMRC expects some of its directorates will receive a net decrease in funding in 2011-12 compared to 2010-11 but it is currently in the process of planning budget allocations and no final decisions have yet been taken.

Tax Avoidance and Evasion

Owen Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of each unit within HM Revenue and Customs tasked to tackle tax *(a)* avoidance and *(b)* evasion; what estimate he has made of the amount of tax collected as a result of each such unit's activities in 2009-10; and if he will make a statement. [29362]

Mr Gauke: HMRC does not collate its yield results in the manner requested. The additional tax liability (including penalties and interest) resulting from all HMRC compliance work in 2008-09 was £12 billion. HMRC data for 2009-10 are not yet available.

The National Audit Office is due to publish a report in mid to late December on whether HMRC is managing its civil tax investigations efficiently and effectively. They will examine whether HMRC has an effective mechanism for referring investigations; manages civil investigations effectively; collects tax due from civil investigations promptly; and is proactive in maximising the impact of this activity.

Tax Avoidance: USA

Mr Blunkett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he plans to take steps to prevent UK companies taken over by US-based concerns from transferring tax liability to holding companies outside UK jurisdiction. [29986]

Mr Gauke: The Government recognise the need for a sustainable corporate tax system and one element of this is proportionate and effective anti-avoidance rules to ensure that UK tax revenues are adequately protected.

The Government recently published "Corporate Tax Reform: delivering a more competitive system" that brings together a significant programme of corporate tax reforms. This demonstrates the Government's commitment to a competitive and stable tax system that allows business to expand and invest in the UK.

Taxation: Private Rented Housing

Graham Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs has made of the *(a)* level of outstanding, *(b)* unassessed and *(c)* undeclared tax liabilities by private landlords in each of the last four tax years; and if he will make a statement. [29419]

Mr Gauke: HMRC does not hold the information requested by the hon. Member.

The self-assessment regime provides for liabilities to be returned and assessed by the taxpayer.

However, the risk of potential loss of tax from private landlords was targeted by the National Property Project which ran between May 2007 and July 2010. The additional cumulative yield from 18,405 interventions settled to date is not split into separate years and totals £49.7 million. This figure is projected to reach £61 million once all inquiries from this project are concluded.

Graham Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many private landlords HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has identified as having completed tax returns incorrectly in each of the last four tax years; and what additional tax liability was assessed as a result of HMRC intervention in each year. [29420]

Mr Gauke: Inquiries into income tax self-assessment returns do not distinguish between private landlords and other taxpayers. However, the risk of potential loss of tax from private landlords was targeted by the National Property Project which ran between May 2007 and July 2010. The additional cumulative yield from 18,405 interventions settled to date is not split into separate years and totals £49.7 million. This figure is projected to reach £61 million once all inquiries from this project are concluded.

Taxation: Sports Competitors

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions his Department's officials have had with UK Sport on the taxation of visiting sports professionals since 6 May 2010. [29508]

Mr Gauke: Treasury Ministers and officials have discussions with a wide variety of organisations as part of the process of policy development and delivery. It is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such discussions.

Universal Credit

Stephen Timms: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what provision will be made for tax credits for pensioners with children when child tax credits are replaced by universal credit for people of working age. [29618]

Chris Grayling: I have been asked to reply.

The policy proposals relating to provision for pensioners with children will be developed to support the Welfare Reform Bill which we plan to introduce early in 2011.

VAT: Channel Islands

Mr Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate he has made of the number of UK businesses based on the UK mainland that ship goods to UK mainland customers via the Channel Islands; [29850]

(2) if he will make an estimate of the likely effect of the rise in the rate of value added tax in January 2011 on the number of UK-based mail order businesses transferring operations to the Channel Islands. [29851]

Mr Gauke: No such estimates have been made.

Mr Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what steps his Department has taken to comply with EU Directive 1983/181 in order to prevent abuse, evasion and avoidance in respect of low value consignment relief; [29852]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with the government of *(a)* Jersey and *(b)* Guernsey on low value consignment relief; and if he will make a statement. [29854]

Mr Gauke: HMRC challenges arrangements it believes to be abusive in all areas of the VAT system.

My Department has been working closely with the authorities in Jersey and Guernsey on this issue, encouraging them to take action to limit the use of the Channel Islands by UK-based companies to secure VAT relief on imports to the UK and to restrain the activities of those companies already based there.

VAT: Registration

Grahame M. Morris: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average length of time taken was to process new value added tax number applications from businesses located in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland in each of the last 12 months. [29957]

Mr Gauke: The following table shows the average length of time taken, in calendar days, to process Value Added Tax (VAT) registration applications in each of the 12 months from December 2009 to November 2010.

	Days
December 2009	20
January 2010	28
February 2010	19
March 2010	19
April 2010	17
May 2010	18
June 2010	21
July 2010	23
August 2010	15
September 2010	16
October 2010	18
November 2010	19

HM Revenue and Customs operates a national registration service and so it is not possible to provide a geographical breakdown.

EDUCATION

Academies

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many schools have applied to become academies *(a)* nationally and *(b)* in Milton Keynes. [29658]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* As of 3 December 2010, 265 schools have applied nationally to convert to academy status of which two applications have been received from schools in Milton Keynes. We want many more schools to benefit from the freedoms and responsibilities of academy status and have recently opened the programme up to allow a much larger number of schools to apply.

British Council Language Teaching

Paul Blomfield: To ask the Secretary of State for Education when he intends to announce his plans for the future funding of the British Council Language Teaching Assistantship scheme in England and Wales. [24792]

Mr Hayes *[holding answer 22 November 2010]:* The detail of budget allocations following the spending review is currently being worked through by Departments. We hope to be able to confirm the situation with regard to the Language Assistant Programme by the end of this year.

Children in Care

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many children in England were the subject of a care order, police protection order or emergency protection order or were placed for adoption at 31 March in each year from 1989 to 2010. [25210]

Tim Loughton: Information on the number of children subject to a care order, police protection order or emergency protection order at 31 March 2010 can found in the following table.

Children looked after at 31 March subject to a Care Order, Police Protection Order or Emergency Protection Order: Year ending 31 March 2010, coverage: England

Legal status at 31 March 2010	*Number*
Care Orders	38,200
Police protection	40
Emergency protection orders	50

Notes:
1. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100 if they exceed 1,000, and to the nearest 10, otherwise.
2. Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.
Source:
SSDA903

The number of children who were placed for adoption at 31 March 1993 to 2010 is shown in the following table. It is not possible to extract a complete year's worth of data for the year ending 31 March 1992 as this is affected by the introduction of the Children Act 1989 on 14 October 1991. Information prior to 1992 is not available.

Children looked after at 31 March who were placed for adoption[1 2 3]: Years ending 31 March 1993 to 2010, coverage: England

	Total number placed for adoption
1993[4]	2,400
1994[4]	2,200
1995[4]	2,200
1996[4]	2,200
1997[4]	2,400
1998[5]	2,400
1999[5]	3,000
2000[5]	3,600
2001[5]	4,000
2002[5]	4,200
2003[5]	3,700
2004[4]	3,600
2005[4]	3,400
2006[4]	3,000
2007[4]	2,700
2008[4]	2,900
2009[4]	2,700
2010[4]	2,300

[1] Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100 as they exceed 1000.

[2] Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

[3] Historical data may differ from older publications. This is mainly due to the implementation of amendments and corrections sent by some local authorities after the publication date of previous materials.

[4] Figures are taken from the SSDA903 return which covered all children looked after.

[5] Figures are derived from the SSDA903 one-third sample survey.

Source:
SSDA 903

Curriculum

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what progress he has made on his review of the national curriculum; when he expects the review to conclude; and if he will make a statement. [28014]

Mr Gibb: We will be announcing full details of the review of the national curriculum shortly. Once the review is launched, we plan to consult widely and then announce our new curriculum in 2012, which will give schools a full academic year to prepare for implementation from September 2013.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what proportion of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each local education authority taught lessons in (i) social and emotional aspects of learning and (ii) the UK Resilience Programme in each of the last five years. [28086]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* The Department does not collect data on the number of primary and secondary schools in each local authority that are taught lessons in social and emotional aspects of learning. According to the National Strategies' data, approximately 90% of primary and 64% of secondary schools were involved in developing approaches to social and emotional skills in 2009.

The UK Resilience Programme (UKRP) started as a pilot programme in September 2007 aimed at Year 7 pupils in 22 secondary schools across three local authorities: Hertfordshire, Manchester and South Tyneside. As of September 2010, 41 secondary schools in Hertfordshire; eight in South Tyneside and 11 in Manchester have teachers delivering the programme to Year 7 pupils. The programme is not designed for primary age children.

From September 2010, nine schools in a further seven local authorities started to teach the UKRP to their Year 7 pupils. They are: two in Gloucestershire, two in Sandwell, one in Barnet, one in Ealing, one in Luton, one in Sefton, and one in Trafford.

Curriculum: Reviews

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education when his Department plans to publish its Curriculum Review; and whether it will be subject to public consultation. [26959]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* Details of our plans to review the national curriculum will be announced shortly. We intend that the review process will be open and transparent and can confirm that we will be consulting widely, including launching a public call for evidence.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Anas Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what grants have been awarded by his Department in 2010-11 to date; what grants he plans to award in each of the next two years; what the monetary value is of each such grant; and to which organisations such grants are made. [25042]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 18 November 2010]:* A summary of the grants to be awarded by DfE in 2010-11, drawn from the Main Departmental Estimate, is set out in Table 1.

At the start of 2010-11, the Department had approximately 230 grant streams of different sizes. The following table shows that around £14 billion went to our non-departmental public bodies and around £37 billion went to local authorities, the largest component being the dedicated schools grant (DSG). Smaller amounts went to the voluntary and community sector, the private sector, and other public sector organisations.

Details of the Department's monthly spend, including grants, wherever the payments are more than £25,000 each month, is available from the Department's website. Details of the Department's expenditure over the next two years are still being considered and will be announced in due course, including the pupil premium for the most deprived pupils.

Table 1 Information on grants to be awarded by DfE in 2010-11

£ million

	Current	*Capital*
Request for Resource 1 — covering most departmental spend except Sure Start		
Central Government spend		
Schools	2,056	
Children and families	896	
Youth	982	
Other	13	
Support for LAs		
Schools	3,799	6
DSG	31,891	
Children and families	426	16

Table 1: Information on grants to be awarded by DfE in 2010-11

	Current	*£ million* *Capital*
Area based grant	918	—
Grant in Aid to NDPBs		
Schools	5,992	—
Children and families	170	—
Youth	7,756	—
Request for Resource 2 Sure Start and Early Years		
Central Government spend		
Children and Families	39	—
Support for LAs		
Children and Families	1,536	315
Grant in aid to NDPBs		
Children and Families	0	
Total (current and capital)	56,812	—

Note:
All values are rounded to the nearest million.
Source:
Data are taken from the 2010-11 Main Estimate.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education on what date his Department informed administrators of the www.direct.gov website that young people currently in receipt of education maintenance allowance (EMA) will continue to receive it for the rest of this academic year but will not receive it next academic year; what information he provided to that website in respect of EMA; and if he will make a statement. [27756]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 1 December 2010]:* This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) which operates the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member for Wigan with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Libraries.

Letter from Peter Lauener, dated 7 December 2010:

One of the responsibilities delegated by the Secretary of State to the Young People's Learning Agency is to maintain the Direct.gov.uk website on behalf of the Department for Education in respect of EMA and all other learner support schemes. The Direct.gov.uk website was updated on 27 October with this statement:

> "EMA will close to new applicants from January 2011. Learner support funds will be available through schools, colleges and training providers to help students who most need it to continue in learning. If you currently get EMA you will continue to receive it for the rest of this academic year, but you will not receive it next academic year."

The information in this Direct.gov.uk statement about eligibility and cut-off dates was confirmed in discussion with the Department for Education in the days immediately following the Spending Review announcement and was also made available to the call centre which deals with direct enquiries about EMA.

Education: Assessments

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Education with reference to his Department's Business Plan for November 2010, when he plans to publish impact indicators on readiness to progress to the next stage of schooling at ages 5 and 11; and if he will make a statement. [25664]

Tim Loughton: The impact and input indicators published earlier this month were in draft form. We will be consulting on these further between now and January and will be finalising their definitions and the method by which they will be calculated for March. Currently we envisage using existing sources of data for these impact indicators of readiness to progress. The precise timing of data releases and publication of indicators will be confirmed by this work.

EU Law

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by his Department; and what estimate he has made of the cost of each such transposition. [27501]

Tim Loughton: There are no EU directives currently pending transposition into domestic legislation by the Department for Education. The policy remit of the Department falls mostly outside of the sphere of Community competence and the Department is therefore unlikely to be the lead Department for transposition of any EU directives.

Free Schools

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what guidance he has issued to officials in his Department on the processing of new applications to open free schools in cases in which the applicant is a religious or faith-based group; and if he will make a statement. [22451]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 8 November 2010]:* No guidance has been issued to officials relating specifically to processing free school applications from religious or faith-based groups. The Department will conduct due diligence checks on all groups and individuals affiliated with a free school proposal, to ensure that they are suitable to conduct a publicly funded school. These checks apply equally to applicants from religious or faith-based groups and to others.

Angie Bray: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many expressions of interest in establishing free schools he has received from *(a)* groups and *(b)* individuals. [24351]

Mr Gibb: The Department for Education does not hold, collect or receive details about expressions of interest for Free Schools. The point at which the Department receives formal notice of applications is when groups put in a proposal form. To date, the Department has received over 180 proposals to set up Free Schools. Due to the complexity of some of these proposals, we are unable to categorise them all as group-led or individual-led, although the vast majority are from groups.

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will put in place mechanisms for public scrutiny of the financial backing of individuals and organisations who are involved in setting up free schools. [24812][1]

Mr Gibb: Once a Free School proposal is approved to progress to business case and plan stage, the main elements of the proposal forms will be put on the Department's website. We will redact personal information to comply with obligations under the Data Protection Act, and other information where we have judged that commercial interests would be prejudiced should we publish the proposal in full.

The Department will conduct due diligence checks, including financial checks, on companies and individuals associated with a proposed Free School. The vast majority of proposers to date are not associated with or supported by third party organisations.

Once a Free School is established, the Academy Trust will be required to publish annual accounts in accordance with the Companies Act 2006. These accounts will be available on the Charity Commission website.

Further Education: Student Numbers

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what proportion of young people participated in post-16 education *(a)* in Bristol East constituency, *(b)* in Bristol, *(c)* in the South West and *(d)* nationally in each of the last five years. [28229]

Mr Gibb: Estimates of participation in education and training for young people in each local authority (LA) in England are published by the Department in a Statistical First Release (SFR) each June. The full SFR can be found on the Department's website:

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000938/index.shtml

Figures are aggregated from LAs to regions and England and are available from 1994 onwards. The figures cannot be disaggregated to parliamentary constituency level. The latest figures, for end 2008, show that an estimated 100% of young people of academic age 16 (usually those in their first year after compulsory education) in the city of Bristol LA were in some form of education or work based learning (WBL) at the end of 2008. The full time-series is provided in the following table.

Participation in education and work based learning (WBL) of academic age 16-year-olds

					Percentage
	2004	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*
City of Bristol	88	92	90	88	100
South West	85	86	87	87	91
England	85	86	87	88	91

Note that it is possible in some circumstances for estimates of participation in some LAs to reach, and even exceed, 100%. This is because the numerator (participation in education) and denominator (population) come from different data sources. For the most part the participation and population data are consistent and young people are assigned to the LA in which they are resident. An exception is participation in independent schools, where learner residence data are not collated nationally. An assumption is made that young people participating in independent schools live in the LA that the school is located. This will tend to inflate participation estimates for LAs with both an untypically high number of independent schools and where cross border flows of independent school pupils between LAs are common.

The city of Bristol is one such LA, with 16% of academic age 16-year-olds participating through independent schools compared with 6% nationally.

GCSE and BTEC

Elizabeth Truss: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many people aged 16 years from each socio-economic group he expects to sit *(a)* GCSE and *(b)* BTEC examination in the 2010-11 academic year. [27760]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 1 December 2010]:* The Department does not hold information on the number of pupils from different socio-economic groups that are entered for different qualifications. It is therefore not possible to estimate the number of people from each group that are expected to sit GCSEs and BTECs at age 16.

However, some information from the Youth Cohort Study and Longitudinal Study of Young People in England about the achievement of GCSEs by socio-economic group is available from the following link:

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000795/index.shtml

table 4.1.1 and 4.1.2.

Information on GCSE attainment by Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) is available from the following link:

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000909/index.shtml

table 18.

Grammar Schools

Nadhim Zahawi: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he plans to make legislative provision for the selective status of grammar schools which change to academy status. [27441]

Mr Gibb: We have ensured that, when maintained grammar schools convert to become academies, the schools and local parents retain the same rights and safeguards they had prior to conversion. Sections 6(3) and 6(4) of the Academies Act 2010 ensure that grammar schools may continue to select by ability on conversion.

Mathematics: Primary Education

Elizabeth Truss: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what guidance his Department issued on the number of hours per week in which mathematics is taught at primary school in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the last three years. [27761]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 1 December 2010]:* No guidance has been issued by the Department for Education on the number of hours per week in which mathematics is taught in primary schools in any of the years in question, although the National Numeracy Strategy, and then the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority jointly with the National Numeracy Strategy, published guidance in 1999 and 2002 respectively, which reflected the previous Government's policies. This Government believes it should be for each primary school to organise its curriculum to include the programmes of study for mathematics including decisions about how much time to devote to teaching this subject.

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[1] *[Official Report, 31 December 2011, Vol. 522, c. 5MC.]*

National Commissioning Framework

Mr Spencer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has for consultation on replacement arrangements for the national commissioning framework. [23297]

Mr Gibb: The Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) has a statutory duty to issue guidance to local authorities on the performance of their duty to ensure that enough suitable education and training is provided for young people, and to consult on the production of that guidance.

The YPLA has been working closely with local authority representative bodies and a range of other partners to develop new statutory guidance. This will replace the National Commissioning Framework which was withdrawn earlier this year. The new statutory guidance will be published before Christmas and will inform the allocations process for the academic year 2011/12, based on decisions that Ministers have made about the simplification of the system for funding young people's education. Alongside this publication, there will be a full public consultation on the statutory guidance to inform the allocations process for 2012/13.

Pupils: Asthma

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he plans to issue new guidance to schools for the purpose of ensuring the effective management of pupils' *(a)* asthma and *(b)* other long-term health conditions. [28035]

Mr Gibb: I refer my hon. Friend to the response given on 29 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 530VV, which explains that the Secretary of State for Education is planning to issue new guidance to schools for the purpose of ensuring the effective management of pupils' *(a)* asthma and *(b)* other long-term health conditions.

Pupils: Bullying

Mrs Glindon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he plans to issue advice to *(a)* teachers, *(b)* schools and *(c)* local authorities on the extent of their responsibilities in relation to bullying which takes place outside school hours and outside schools between pupils of different schools. [27701]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 30 November 2010]:* Tackling bullying is a top priority for this coalition Government. Teachers, pupils and charities report that prejudice-based bullying in particular is increasing.

That is why our Schools White Paper, "The Importance of Teaching", highlighted the importance of tackling incidents of homophobic and prejudice-based bullying. We want schools to educate children about the differences between different groups of people and create a culture of respect and understanding.

As bullying also takes place outside of school. We will revise existing statutory guidance on behaviour in order to strengthen head teachers' authority to tackle pupils who misbehave beyond the boundaries of the school.

The Department will radically reduce the existing 481 pages of guidance for schools on bullying to ensure it is readable and used by schools.

Pupils: Disability

Mr Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps he is taking to promote disability awareness among students in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools. [28581]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 3 December 2010]:* The current Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education framework for both primary and secondary schools provides an opportunity for teachers to raise awareness of disability issues amongst their pupils. The programmes of study include learning about identifying and respecting the differences between people, including those with disabilities. Pupils are taught about the effects of all types of stereotyping and discrimination, how to challenge them assertively and ways of working cooperatively with a range of people who are different from themselves.

School Sport Partnerships: Finance

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether his Department has issued guidance to school sport partnerships on the identification of alternative funding sources from April 2011. [25047]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* At the end of October, the Department authorised grant payments to school sport partnerships covering their work up to the end of February 2011. At that time, partnerships were told that the Department would be writing to them about the conditions attached to that grant and about funding beyond February 2011. We intend to write to partnerships shortly about this. We have issued no guidance to partnerships about possible alternative sources of funding. As a result of the spending review, schools' overall budgets will not be reduced but will increase by £3.6 billion in cash terms by 2014-15, the end of the next spending review period.

Schools: Asbestos

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the number of school *(a)* staff and *(b)* children affected by an asbestos-related illness in the latest period for which figures are available. [29601]

Chris Grayling: I have been asked to reply.

No research evidence is available on which to base such estimates for either school staff or pupils.

However, deaths from the cancer, mesothelioma, which is the main and most serious of the asbestos related diseases, can be regarded as an indicator of risk from exposure to asbestos. There is strong evidence that this disease is usually a consequence of heavy past occupational exposure to airborne asbestos fibres, although sometimes it is linked to exposure in a domestic setting. There is no evidence to say whether or not any of the remaining cases where there is no recognised cause may have been due to exposures in schools at a time when asbestos was in widespread use as a building material.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) tracks all deaths in Great Britain where mesothelioma has been recorded as a cause. HSE's periodical analyses of these deaths by occupation show that mesothelioma does occur among those whose last occupation is recorded as a teacher. The most recently available analyses by occupational group are for deaths during 2002-05. Among those aged 16 to 74—the ages for which occupation is reliably coded—there were 53 male deaths and 23 female deaths among those whose last occupation was recorded as a teacher. In statistical terms these numbers are broadly in line with the average for all occupations. Teachers do not stand out as a higher risk group.

Of those deaths involving teachers it is not possible to say whether any are a result of asbestos exposure during the course of their work in schools as it can take decades for the disease to develop after exposure and the cause may lie in other jobs earlier in life or in non-occupational activities.

A recent, detailed, independent epidemiological study of mesothelioma in Britain conducted by Professor Julian Peto supports the conclusion that teachers are not a higher risk group. This study showed that the risk for those who had carried out at least five years work as a teacher or school worker, and had never worked in jobs classified as higher risk, was statistically no different from that for individuals who had only ever done office work.

Schools: Cumbria

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools there are in each parliamentary constituency in Cumbria in respect of which no other school for pupils of the same age range is located within a four mile radius. [26930]

Mr Gibb: The following table provides the information requested.

Numbers of schools with no other school for the same age range located within a four mile radius by parliamentary constituency in Cumbria, 2010-11

	Maintained primary schools[1]		*Maintained secondary schools*[2]	
Parliamentary constituency	*Total*	*Schools with no other school for the same age range within a four mile radius*[3]	*Total*	*Schools with no other school for the same age range within a four mile radius*[3]
Barrow and Furness	42	0	5	1
Carlisle	30	0	5	0
Copeland	45	2	5	2
Penrith and the Border	64	5	7	5
Westmorland and Lonsdale	43	3	8	6
Workington	50	5	7	4

[1] Includes infant schools, junior schools and primary schools.

[2] Includes academies.

[3] The four mile radius includes schools located in neighbouring local authorities.

Source:

Edubase 25 November 2010

Schools: Governing Bodies

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what guidance his Department issues to local authorities on the appointment of school governors. [28195]

Mr Gibb: Guidance on the appointment and election of school governors in maintained schools is contained in "The Statutory Guidance on the Constitution of School Governing Bodies" which is available at:

www.governornet.co.uk/publishArticle.cfm?contentId=1342

There is no guidance which is sent specifically to local authorities.

Schools: Gravesham

Mr Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many children of each nationality have attended schools in Gravesham in each of the past 10 years. [28865]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* The Department does not collect information on the nationality of pupils in schools.

Schools: Health Education

Mr Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to consult parents on the proposals in his schools White Paper on personal, sexual and health education; and if he will make a statement. [28684]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* As set out in our White Paper, 'The Importance of Teaching', the Coalition Government wants all children and young people to receive high quality Personal Social Health and Economic (PSHE) education. Further details on the internal review of PSHE education, including who will be consulted, will be announced in the new year.

Schools: Inspections

Charlotte Leslie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many formal appeals in respect of the outcome of an Ofsted inspection were brought by schools in each of the last five years; and how many such appeals were *(a)* upheld, *(b)* partially upheld and *(c)* rejected in each such year. [24105]

Mr Gibb: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, Christine Gilbert, has written to my hon. Friend and a copy of her letter has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Letter from Christine Gilbert, dated 17 November 2010:

Your recent parliamentary question has been passed to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, for response.

I have set out the information requested in a table at the end of this letter.

Schools cannot make 'formal appeals' in respect of the outcome of Ofsted inspections but can make complaints about inspection judgments. The table details complaints made by schools about any school inspection judgment following inspections carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The table includes information for each financial year since April 2006. The total number of inspections in each of the years is included to provide some context. Because of their nature, the outcomes for complaints investigations regarding inspection judgments are either upheld or not; we do not partially uphold complaints about inspection judgments.

A copy of this reply has been sent to Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for Schools, and will be placed in the library of both Houses.

Section 5 school inspection complaints data

Period	*Number of school inspections*[1]	*Number of complaints about judgments for inspections of schools*[1]	*As a percentage of number of inspections*	*Number of upheld complaints about judgments for inspections of schools*[1]	*As a percentage of number of complaints*	*Upheld complaints about judgments as a percentage of number of school inspections*
1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007	7,682	161	2.1	16	9.9	0.2
1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008	7,692	212	2.8	29	13.7	0.4
1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009	7,086	186	2.6	20	10.8	0.3
1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010	6,333	250	3.9	29	11.6	0.5
1 April 2010 to 30 September 2010[2]	2,685	151	5.6	21	13.9	0.8

[1] This includes inspections of academies.

[2] Please note that this is only six months' data.

Schools: North East

Pat Glass: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what funding his Department plans to provide for schools in *(a)* North West Durham constituency and *(b)* the North East in each of the next five years. [25511]

Mr Gibb: The Department expects to announce the school funding allocations for 2011-12 by the end of the year. We made it clear in our school funding consultation earlier this year that our longer-term aim is to bring in a simpler, more transparent and fairer funding system, and to help reduce the funding differences between similar schools in different areas. (Consultation on School Funding 2011-12, July 2010). Our White Paper, 'The Importance of Teaching', explains that it will hold full and detailed consultations on school funding changes for 2012-13 and beyond.

Schools: Sports

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what schools which are members of School Sport Partnerships each Minister in his Department has visited since their appointment; what assessment was made of the work of each of those institutions; and if he will make a statement. [27744]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 1 December 2010]:* All maintained schools in England are part of the network of school sport partnerships. This includes all of the many schools that Ministers in the Department for Education have visited since May 2010. These visits will have been for a range of purposes: to see examples of good practice; to meet and talk to students and staff; and to witness schools in action at first hand. The purpose of these visits is quite categorically not to make assessments of these institutions; that is the role of Ofsted.

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what specialist sports schools and colleges he has visited since his appointment; what assessment was made of the work of each of those institutions; and if he will make a statement. [27745]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 1 December 2010]:* Since May 2010, the Secretary of State for Education has visited three schools with a specialism in sport: Harefield Academy in Hillingdon, City of London Academy in Southwark and Consett Community Sports College in Durham. The Secretary of State was very impressed with what he saw, as he is when he visits many schools in England. In particular, he was impressed with the way the schools were making maximum use of the freedoms afforded to them by their academy status to improve provision for their pupils, both within their sport specialism and across the whole curriculum.

Schools: Transport

Iain Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what funding Walton High School, Milton Keynes, received from his Department towards its School Travel Plan in 2010-11; and how much such funding it will receive in each of the next three years. [24424]

Mr Gibb: Walton High School, Milton Keynes, submitted an approved school travel plan for the year ended March 2010. Due to a review of all capital budgets within the Department no school travel plan grants have been paid. We shall notify all schools of the outcome once final decisions have been taken following the capital review.

Science: GCSE

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Education pursuant to the answer of 27 July 2010, *Official Report*, column 1228W, on Science: GCSE, when he expects to complete his assessment of the action needed to ensure that all schools offer the possibility for students to study three separate science subjects at GCSE level. [27131]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 29 November 2010]* The Schools White Paper 2010, 'The Importance of Teaching', confirmed the importance the Government place on making the study of the three separate science subjects at GCSE accessible to all pupils. This includes exploring how schools delivering triple science might be recognised in the performance tables; the need to increase the number of specialist science teachers, for example, by providing financial incentives to attract the best graduates in shortage subjects such as the sciences into teaching; and improving the skills of existing science teachers. The support the Government will provide to enable wider participation in the three separate sciences at GCSE level is still subject to the more detailed outcome of the spending review and we will announce our plans as soon as that is finalised.

Special Educational Needs

Laura Sandys: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the *(a)* level of availability and *(b)* standard of educational provision for children with special educational needs in (i) South Thanet constituency and (ii) England. [24590]

Sarah Teather: Planning and making appropriate provision to meet the needs of children with SEN is the responsibility of local authorities, such information is not held centrally by the Department for Education. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on a local authority to provide sufficient schools in number and character to ensure appropriate education for pupils with special educational needs. School organisation and special educational provision are matters for local consultation and determination, and where there are disagreements, they may be referred to the independent schools adjudicator for consideration and are not ones in which the Government can intervene.

I am publishing a Green Paper to look at the wide range of issues concerning provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities. To inform this important work, I issued a call for views and have met parents, teachers, local authorities, charities and other groups. The call for views attracted over 1,800 responses from a wide range of people and organisations. In order to give those views the most careful consideration, I will be publishing the Green Paper in February 2011.

Timber

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the compliance of *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber. [27839]

Tim Loughton: The Department of Education includes in all appropriate contracts where the supply of timber may be used, clauses governing the legal use of timber as defined in the UK Government Timber Procurement Policy—definition of 'legal' and 'sustainable' for timber procurement and contained within CPET (Central Point of Expertise on Timber).

Under these clauses, contractors are obliged to obtain documentary evidence that the timber and wood derived products is legal timber and if requested, shall supply this evidence to the Department.

Higher Education: Scholarships

Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will bring forward proposals to provide transitional funding in academic year 2011-12 for the period between the end of the Aimhigher programme and the introduction of the new access commitments by universities and the new National Scholarship Fund. [28597]

Mr Willetts: I have been asked to reply.

The arrangements for new access agreements and the £150 million National Scholarship Programme are being introduced to coincide with the new funding arrangements for students in 2012.

Universities, schools and colleges have learned much from Aimhigher about "what works". Universities already use this to inform their own outreach activities covered by existing access agreements, agreed with the Office for Fair Access, and the widening participation strategic assessments they submit to HEFCE. Helping young people find out about higher education is a normal part of what schools do and schools will receive additional support through the pupil premium from April 2011. In this context we have concluded transitional funding is unnecessary.

The National Scholarship Programme will form part of a package of measures to support disadvantaged young people through their education, including the introduction of the £2.5 billion pupil premium in April 2011, that will help to encourage young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to apply to Higher Education.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

2017 World Athletics Championship

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (1) what estimate he has made of the potential contribution to the economy of the UK hosting the 2017 World Athletics Championship; [29483]

(2) whether his Department has undertaken a cost-benefit analysis of providing guarantees to UK Athletics for its bid to host the 2017 World Athletics Championship. [29746]

Hugh Robertson: In conjunction with UK Athletics and Visit London, UK Sport commissioned a feasibility study into bidding for and hosting a World Athletics Championships. That study contained an estimate of the economic impact of the event, based on UK Sport's eventIMPACTS methodology, totalling £102.6 million.

Preparatory work is under way on assessing the level and cost of likely guarantees required for a bid, however, detailed assessments will begin once the IAAF release their bidding requirements for 2017.

Archery

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many competitive archery venues there are in England. [29623]

Hugh Robertson: This Department does not hold the information requested.

Additionally, Sport England has spoken with the National Governing Body for Archery who stated that they also do not collect the data in the manner it has been requested.

Athletics

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many athletics tracks suitable for *(a)* national and *(b)* international competitors there are in each local authority area in England. [29676]

Hugh Robertson: According to UK Athletics, the minimum number of lanes required for national and international track competition is eight.

Sport England's Active Places website shows that there are a total of 124 floodlit athletics tracks with eight lanes across the country.

Cinemas: Listed Buildings

Sir Alan Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many *(a)* cinemas and *(b)* theatres have had listed building status removed as a result of a submission to his Department in the last 10 years. [30052]

John Penrose: English Heritage has advised us that in the last 10 years, four cinemas and one theatre have been delisted.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what his Department's annual budget for conferences was on *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [29960]

John Penrose: The Department does not hold a separate budget specifically for conferences. The budget for conferences is included within the Department's wider hospitality budget which includes internal hospitality, conferences and committees. This budget at May 2010 was £162,478.00, and in December 2010 it stood at £120,484.00.

Following the formation of the new Government and the resulting spending review, the Department announced an intention to reduce administration costs by 50% by 2014-15. As part of this budget reduction all administration costs across the Department are subject to review, including those for hosting conferences.

Digital Broadcasting: Wales

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of digital switchover as a means of improving reception in *(a)* Wrexham and *(b)* Wales. [30339]

Mr Vaizey: Switchover extended reliable coverage of digital terrestrial services from a predicted 57% of Welsh households before switchover to an estimated 97.8% today. In addition, the number of households predicted to be able to receive digital TV is slightly greater than the number formerly able to receive the four main analogue channels. Further details of coverage predictions can be found on the Ofcom fact sheet on coverage No. 3

http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/tv-research/dsoind/factsheets/

There are no specific figures for predicted coverage in Wrexham. However, most viewers in the town should be able to receive signals from at least one of the main Winter Hill and Wrexham Rhos relay transmitters.

Detailed predictions of coverage from each transmitter at specific postcodes is available at

www.digitaluk.co.uk/postcodechecker/

and a local RDI (Registered Digital Installers) or CAI (Confederation of Aerial Industries) accredited aerial installer would be able to offer further advice on the practicalities of reception from multiple transmitters.

Football: World Cup

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of Government support for the Football Association's bid to host the FIFA World cup in 2018. [29239]

Hugh Robertson: The Government did not contribute any funding directly to the bid to host the 2018 World cup.

Ministers made a number of visits in support of the bid, and the cost of these are currently being collated.

Government officials also worked in developing technical and wider aspects of the bid for the Football Association, however, precise details of this can be calculated only at a disproportionate cost.

2017 World Athletics Championship

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport which stadiums in England his Department has assessed as being of a standard to host an IAAF World Athletics Championship. [29625]

Hugh Robertson: There are currently no athletics stadia in England with the permanent facilities and capacity required to host a World Athletics Championships.

The feasibility of potential venues, including the Olympic Stadium once its future use is determined, will be assessed.

Internet: Further Education

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport whether he plans to issue guidance to further education colleges on their classification as *(a)* an internet service provider, *(b)* a subscriber and *(c)* a communications provider under the provisions of the Digital Economy Act 2010. [28633]

Mr Vaizey: I have been asked to reply in my capacity as a Minister in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Ofcom will shortly be publishing the code of practice heralded by the Digital Economy Act 2010, which will set out the initial obligations to tackle the online infringement of copyright. We expect the code to make clear the classification and requirements under the Act of internet service providers, subscribers and communications providers. Therefore, we have no plans at present to issue guidance specifically targeted at further education colleges with relation to the initial obligations. We remain confident that the initial obligations will not cause undue difficulties for further education colleges.

Internet: Regulation

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what estimate he has made of the cost to *(a)* further education colleges, *(b)* universities and *(c)* public libraries of implementing the provisions of the Digital Economy Act 2010. [28634]

Mr Vaizey: I have been asked to reply in my capacity as a Minister in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

We remain confident that the implementation of the online infringement of copyright provisions in the Digital Economy Act 2010 will not cause undue difficulties for further education colleges, universities, public libraries or other premises offering wireless internet access. Therefore, we have made no estimate of the costs specifically incurred to these institutions of implementing the provisions of the Act. Ofcom will shortly be publishing the code of practice which is required to set out the details of the initial obligations heralded by the Act. The Government recognise that clarification is needed for wi-fi service providers, and we have indicated that this is an area which we expect the code to cover. The Government do not anticipate agreeing a code which does not take proper account of the position of wi-fi providers, such as further education colleges, universities and public libraries.

In the meantime, there are simple and proportionate steps such bodies can adopt to prevent infringement on their networks. Many already do so and, in many cases, their activities to prevent infringement already go far beyond what the Act requires.

Libraries: Membership

Alison McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport whether he plans to bring forward proposals to provide for library membership from birth. [29690]

Mr Vaizey: It is for local authorities to decide what library services their communities need and to allocate their budgets accordingly. We will not constrain local government by pursuing the spending commitment to promote library membership as an entitlement from birth, which was set out by the previous government in the Public Library Modernisation Review Policy statement published in March 2010.

With or without this promotional activity, public libraries across the country continue to make a valuable contribution to early years learning.

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

David Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (1) what consultation he has had with trade unions representing staff of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council *(a)* prior and *(b)* subsequent to announcing its abolition; [30126]

(2) what requests for meetings he has received from trade unions representing staff of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council subsequent to announcing its abolition. [30127]

Mr Vaizey: The Secretary of State did not consult with trade unions representing staff in the Museums, Libraries and Archives council (MLA) prior or subsequently to the abolition announcement.

Since the decision the MLA has had ongoing meetings and regular dialogue with the recognised trade union, Prospect, and in addition kept staff up to date to the best of its knowledge on the Government's intentions for delivering MLA functions in the future. In addition, on 1 December MLA placed all its employees formally 'At Risk' of redundancy and started a four-month period of formal consultation with staff and trade unions to enable it to reach final decisions as to the future of its staff.

I have received one request for a meeting with Prospect.

Olympic Games

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport which Olympic sport has the fewest venues for participative competition *(a)* with and *(b)* without spectator provision in England; and how many such venues there are. [29621]

Hugh Robertson: This information is not held by the Department, or its arm's length body, Sport England.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many people in England participated in each *(a)* Olympic and *(b)* Paralympic sport in 2009. [29635]

Hugh Robertson: The Sport England Active People Survey 3 shows those participants engaged in Olympic sport in 2009.

Due to the low levels of participation in Paralympic sports, we are not able to provide reliable estimates for participation in 2009.

Olympic sport[1]	*Paralympic sport included*	*Number participating once a week*[2]	*Number participating once a month*[3]
Archery		[4]	58,600
Athletics	Paralympic athletics	1,739,700	2,670,500
Badminton		539,400	991,800
Basketball		193,100	333,200
Boxing		121,400	162,900
Canoeing and Kayaking		62,900	146,500
Cycling	Paralympic cycling	1,880,000	3,884,100
Equestrian	Paralympic equestrian	341,500	425,900
Fencing	Wheelchair fencing	12,200	20,200
Football	Paralympic football	2,122,700	3,106,600
Gymnastics		48,300	99,000
Handball			
Hockey		95,700	154,600
Judo	Paralympic judo	15,100	16,500
Modern Pentathlon		[4]	[4]
Rowing	Paralympic rowing	49,000	99,100
Sailing	Paralympic sailing	83,000	175,000
Shooting	Paralympic shooting	[4]	109,400
Swimming	Paralympic swimming	3,162,400	5,500,800
Table Tennis		85,500	195,400
Taekwondo		27,000	35,000
Tennis		530,200	987,400
Triathlon		[4]	[4]
Volleyball	Volleyball - sitting	39,200	71,000
Weightlifting	Powerlifting	116,000	172,700

[1] The Active People Survey only identifies separate participation figures for some paralympic sports. The table indicates those sports where figures for the paralympic sport are included within the Olympic sport total. Where separate paralympic sports are identified the survey received insufficient responses to provide robust estimates of participation.

[2] Once per week participation is based on the number of people who have taken part four times in the last 28 days for 30 minutes at moderate intensity.

[3] Once per month participation is based on the number of people who have taken part in the sport at all in the last 28 days.

[4] Insufficient sample size to provide robust estimates of participation.

Olympic Games 2012

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington (Tom Brake) of 26 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 173W, on Olympics: sporting legacy, over what period of time and in respect of which *(a)* sports and *(b)* age groups he proposes to seek to reverse the decline in competitive sport; and against what criteria he proposes to measure progress on this objective. [29966]

Hugh Robertson: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is in close discussions with the Department for Education about competitive sport in schools and we are working to ensure this fits with the new Government approach to school sports, that being to give schools more autonomy and reducing centrally determined objectives.

As part of this objective we are introducing a new School Sport Competition in 2011 which should see levels of competition increase, but most importantly the competition should appeal to a wide range of young people of different tastes and abilities.

Sport England's mass participation legacy plan Places People Play will bring the sporting legacy to life in communities across the country to deliver a sustainable increase in adult participation for the games and beyond by improving local sports facilities and by getting more people involved in grassroots sporting activities and in Olympic and Paralympic sports.

For example, as part of the Places People Play programme, Sportivate, which will be launched in April 2011 and run until March 2015, is designed to capture the excitement of London 2012 and provide attractive sporting opportunities for young people aged between 14 and 25. Those involved will be given six weeks coaching at a local venue and provided with guidance on places and people they can continue to compete with.

Adult participation in sport will continue to be measured by Sport England's Active People Survey.

S4C

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what plans he has to meet hon. Members representing constituencies in Wales to discuss governance arrangements for S4C. [29972]

Mr Vaizey: The Government are committed to the future of Welsh language programming and to the future of S4C as a strong and independent Welsh TV service. Welsh MPs have already made representations to DCMS Ministers about the future governance arrangements for S4C and a wide range of interested parties will be consulted in the future.

Schools Sport Partnerships

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport which Schools Sport Partnerships *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have visited since 6 May 2010. [29517]

Hugh Robertson: In my capacity as Minister for Sport and the Olympics, I visited Eltham Green School Sport Partnership in June as part of National School Sport Week. I have also visited two schools, Ling Bob Junior and Sacred Heart, which are part of the Brooksbank and Burnage School Sport Partnerships respectively. I have also visited a number of School Sport Partnerships in my own constituency as part of the Kent School Games.

Additionally, the Secretary of State met with School Sport Partnerships at a round-table event he hosted in July during National School Sport Week, and we have both met Steve Grainger, chief executive of the Youth Sport Trust, on a number of occasions to discuss related issues.

Sport: Cycling

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (1) what venues there are in England for international competition-standard BMX biking; [29622]

(2) how many velodromes there are in England. [29624]

Hugh Robertson: Neither this Department or Sport England hold the information requested.

Sports: Revenue

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (1) how much revenue accrued to the Exchequer from foreign sports professionals visiting the UK in each of the last three years; [29509]

(2) what the three highest revenue-generating sports were in 2009; and how much was generated from foreign professionals in those sports visiting the UK in that year. [29510]

Mr Gauke: I have been asked to reply.

Revenue from visiting foreign sports professionals is not distinguished from that of visiting foreign entertainers in HMRC records. The information requested could therefore be obtained only through the examination of individual case files at disproportionate cost.

Tourism

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what plans he has to increase the competitiveness of the UK tourist industry. [29855]

John Penrose: We shall increase the competitiveness of the UK tourist industry by raising standards and productivity through VisitEngland working closely with local destination management organisations. By responding to customer feedback, we shall also improve the welcome shown to foreign visitors, supply them with better customer information and signage, and raise staff and management skills. We shall also cut red tape and regulations that burden tourism businesses.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Higher Education: Scholarships

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) whether the functions of Aimhigher will continue to be undertaken in 2011-12; [28544]

(2) what mechanisms will be put in place to assist the schools supported by Aimhigher to help their low-income pupils go on to higher education in the next four years; and if he will make a statement. [28545]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: This Government have been very clear about the importance of widening participation and improving fair access in higher education—all those with the ability should have access to higher education irrespective of family income.

We are establishing a new framework with increased responsibility on universities to widen participation. We are also introducing the National Scholarship Programme which will form part of a package of measures to support disadvantaged young people through their education, including the introduction of the £2.5 billion pupil premium in April 2011 that will help to encourage young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to apply to higher education.

Universities, schools and colleges have learned much from Aimhigher about what works, and activities to help young people find out about higher education are a normal part of what schools do. Higher education institutions will build on this knowledge and continue to deliver a range of outreach activities including those in their existing access agreements, agreed with the Office for Fair Access, and their widening participation strategic assessments. Within this context, the Aimhigher programme will cease at the end of this academic year (July 2011).

Animal Experiments

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will ensure that specific outcomes and milestones for the reduction of animal experiments funded by the Medical Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council are included in those research councils' delivery plans. [30151]

Mr Willetts: The Medical Research Council (MRC) and Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) are non-departmental public bodies which receive their grant in aid from this Department. In keeping with the Haldane principle, day to day decisions on the scientific merits of different strategies, programme and projects are taken by the research councils without Government involvement.

The law states that the use of animals in research where it may cause pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm, is subject to licence and will be permitted only where there is no practicable alternative. The MRC and BBSRC are committed to ensuring that any research programmes they fund follow high standards of animal welfare and avoid the use of animals wherever an alternative exists. All proposals submitted to MRC and BBSRC are subject to robust peer review which includes assessment of the justification for the proposed use of animals.

MRC and BBSRC are strongly committed to promoting the principles of Replacement, Refinement and Reduction (the 3Rs) of animals in research, and are the major funders of the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs).

www.nc3rs.org.uk

NC3Rs provides a UK focus for the promotion, development and implementation of the 3Rs in animal research and testing, and brings together academia, industry, government and animal welfare organisations. NC3Rs aims to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas, and the translation of research findings into practice that will benefit both animals and science. NC3Rs funds high-quality 3Rs research, organises workshops and symposia to disseminate and advance the 3Rs, and develops 3Rs information resources and guidelines.

All the research councils are required to produce a delivery plan which sets out how their funding allocation from this Department will be spent over the spending review period. Delivery plans are high level documents and do not set out specific milestones in relation to outcomes.

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what account the Medical Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council take of public concern for animal welfare in their policies on animal experimentation; and by what processes. [30152]

Mr Willetts: The Medical Research Council (MRC) and Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) are non-departmental public bodies which receive their grant in aid from the Department.

The MRC and BBSRC are very aware of their responsibilities to understand and take account of public concerns about any aspect of the research they fund. The MRC and BBSRC provide support for, and are active members of, the Boyd Group, which brings together scientists, research funders and animal welfare groups to discuss policy issues related to animals in research. The MRC and BBSRC work with animal welfare organisations such as the RSPCA in relation to policies on animal experimentation.

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http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/document.asp?id=1319

and also from the MRC and BBSRC). Compliance with the guidelines is a condition of funding for all grants involving the use of animals.

The BBSRC is also guided and advised in these areas by its Bioscience for Society Strategy Panel, a panel of independent experts whose responsibilities include:

Advising BBSRC on current and emerging public attitudes to bioscience issues and the conduct of research, identifying issues requiring BBSRC action.

Approving and guiding the development of BBSRC's programme in public engagement, dialogue and consultation to meet government and BBSRC strategic plan objectives.

Making proposals to help BBSRC discharge its social responsibilities by further integrating ethical and other social issues into its planning on policy and funding.

Additionally, BBSRC has strategic policy priorities in the 3Rs and in "Welfare of managed animals (including livestock and companion animals)"

www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/priorities.aspx

Apprentices

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what proportion of apprentices aged *(a)* under 19 years and *(b)* 19 years and over were engaged in companies with (i) one employee, (ii) fewer than 10 employees and (iii) fewer than 50 employees in the latest period figures are available. [30205]

Mr Hayes: The following shows the percentage of apprenticeship starts in 2009/10 by the size of their employer, based upon information to date for the 2009/10 academic year. This analysis is based upon the size of the site-level employer. A national employer that has a number of sites across the country may therefore be recorded as a site-level employer multiple times. It is not possible to provide more detailed breakdowns of employer size for those employers with less than 50 employees.

Apprenticeship starts in 2009/10 by site-level employer size[1]

	Age[2]		
Site-level employer size	*Under 19*	*19 and Over*	*Total*
1 to 49	47%	36%	41%
50+	34%	50%	43%
Unknown	19%	14%	16%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Total number of starts	114,000	159,800	273,900

[1] Figures are based on the number of employees at the local, site level. A national employer that has a number of sites across the country may therefore be recorded as a site-level employer multiple times.

[2] Age is based on age at start of programme.

Source:

Individualised Learner Record

Apprentices: Females

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will take steps to ensure that *(a)* the National Apprenticeship Service and *(b)* new apprenticeship places increase the proportion of women in disciplines in which they have been under-represented; how much he plans to allocate to adult apprenticeships in the next three years; and what objectives he plans to set for such apprenticeships in respect of gender balance. [30204]

Mr Hayes: The Government are committed to increasing the number of apprenticeship places for all suitably qualified people, regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religious beliefs. In the spending review, we announced that we will increase investment in adult apprenticeships by up to £250 million during this Parliament. There will be investment of £605 million in 2011-12 and an indicative budget of £648 million in

2012-13. By the 2014-15 financial year, we will have in place sufficient funding for 75,000 more adult apprenticeship places than the previous Government were providing.

Men and women are evenly balanced in terms of numbers on the apprenticeships programme, but we know there is gender segregation across some sectors, with women under-represented in higher paid sectors such as construction and engineering. This broadly reflects the gender divide in the workplace, but it is an area we are keen to address.

Good quality information, advice and guidance are critical to helping everyone make informed choices. It is important that this information is presented in a non-biased and non-stereotypical manner. That is why we are also introducing an enhanced information, advice and guidance service for adults, offering high quality personalised information about a range of training and support.

Increasing the number, quality and background of people applying for apprenticeships is a priority for National Apprenticeships Service. The NAS is working with careers guidance agencies, local authorities, Job Centre Plus and other key partners to develop resources on apprenticeships to encourage people to think about apprenticeships in a non-stereotypical way. NAS also works with employers to help them understand and be more responsive to the needs of atypical and under-represented groups, for example women in construction and engineering.

The 'Diversity in Apprenticeships' pilots, which are due to commence delivery early in 2011, will test out new approaches to addressing under-representation and inequality in apprenticeships by creating a mutually supportive 'critical mass' of learners in non-traditional occupations. Seven of these pilots are focusing on the issue of under representation of females in male dominated sectors.

Biofuels: Job Creation

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the role of the biodiesel industry in creating skilled jobs in the environmental sector; and if he will make a statement. [30148]

Mr Prisk: This Department has made no such assessment.

Broadband: Crewe

Mr Timpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the *(a)* adequacy and *(b)* levels of usage of broadband services in Crewe and Nantwich constituency. [29532]

Mr Vaizey: Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) estimates that Crewe and Nantwich constituency has approximately 47,600 residential and commercial properties. They also estimate approximately 1.5% of these premises would have either a slow broadband service or no service at all.

Broadband: Scotland

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the likely effects on *(a)* Scotland and *(b)* West Dunbartonshire local authority area of the implementation of the Government's policy on access to super-fast broadband. [30342]

Mr Vaizey: I am replying in view of my responsibility for communications policy. I have made no specific assessment, but expect that along with other areas in the UK, Scotland and West Dunbartonshire will benefit from greater availability of superfast broadband as a result of the UK Government's policies.

Broadband: Wales

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has had discussions with the Leader of the Conservative Group in the National Assembly for Wales on the selection of super-fast broadband pilot areas. [30340]

Mr Vaizey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to my answer of 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 402W.

Business

Mr Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the merits of establishing an advisory panel of entrepreneurs; and if he will make a statement. [30481]

Mr Prisk: Returning the economy to sustainable growth is the overriding priority for the Government. The private sector delivers growth and it is the decisions of individual business leaders, workers and entrepreneurs that will ensure our economic future. We therefore need to draw on the experience and ideas of entrepreneurs in considering how Government can best support this process of growth and renewal. To assist this, I have recently established a new Entrepreneurs' Forum that will meet from time to time and complement existing channels of dialogue with business.

Consumers: Protection

Michael Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will bring forward proposals for enhanced consumer protection against aggressive online sales marketing; and if he will make a statement. [30067]

Mr Davey: Consumers are protected against aggressive sales marketing by the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs). The regulations ban commercial practices which through the use of harassment, coercion or undue influence are likely to significantly impair the average consumer's freedom of choice in relation to goods or services, and thereby cause or be likely to cause him to make a choice he would not otherwise have made (eg purchase a good or service he would not otherwise have purchased). The CPRs apply as much to online sales marketing as they do to traditional marketing techniques. The CPRs are enforced by the Office of Fair Trading and local authority trading standards services.

Debts: Developing Countries

Mr Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what funding the Export Credits Guarantee Department has received from other

Government departments to meet the cost of cancelling debt owed to it by heavily-indebted poor countries in the latest period for which figures are available. [26550]

Mr Davey: Since 2000 approximately £93 million has been paid to ECGD by the Department for International Development in respect of amounts owed by heavily indebted poor countries. It relates to debt which HMG has forgiven but which ECGD has been unable to write-off for statutory reasons.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what his Department's annual budget for conferences was on *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [29964]

Mr Davey: This Department's annual administration budget for conferences was £741,000 on 7 May and £773,000 on 7 December. The current total annual forecast is for expenditure of £691,000.

Departmental Equality

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what methodology he is using for the equality impact assessment of decisions on his Department's expenditure over the Spending Review period; and what measures are in place to ensure that the allocations from his Department's science budget comply with the duty to promote equality provided by the Equality Act 2010. [30143]

Mr Willetts: To assess the equality impacts of BIS expenditure decisions over the spending review period, analysis of likely effects is to be based on the best mix of both hard numbers and more qualitative information. This will feed into the wider cost-benefit appraisal of policy decisions.

Where we believe that funding changes have negative equality impacts we will seek to mitigate these as far as possible within the policy delivery.

Even if we believe that funding changes will have no equality impacts we will anyway review these areas at regular intervals and, should negative effects come to light, appropriately assess and seek to mitigate these.

Following completion of the detailed work on the science and research budget allocations, we will work with partner bodies to ensure that we meet the requirements of all equality and diversity legislation.

Departmental Manpower

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many agency workers his Department and its agencies employ at each pay grade. [28501]

Mr Davey: The Department currently employs five temporary agency staff at clerical/junior executive level under the Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions framework agreement for the supply of temporary agency staff. In addition a number of specialist posts are filled on a temporary basis by agency workers. To provide the information requested for the specialists would involve disproportionate cost. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has clear guidance that states agency staff may only be used in exceptional circumstances where the post cannot be filled by a permanent member of staff and where the work is deemed to be business critical.

I have asked the chief executives of the Insolvency Service, Companies House, the National Measurement Office, the Intellectual Property Office and the Skills Funding Agency and they will respond to the hon. Member directly.

Letter from Geoff Russell, dated 6 December 2010:

Thank you for your parliamentary question in which you asked how many agency workers does the Skills Funding Agency (the Agency) employ and at each grade.

Please be advised that the Agency currently deploys 113 contingent workers. Of these, we classify 20 as agency workers ('temps') who are engaged in routine administrative functions; the remaining 93 are those where we have been unsuccessful in our attempts to recruit directly and these individuals are engaged in more specialist, professional activities—for example, IT-related work and project management.

We do not analyse the grade at which each contingent worker is deployed—they are not our direct employees and are therefore outside our pay grades.

Letter from Stephen Speed, dated 6 December 2010:

The Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, has asked me to reply to your question how many agency workers his Department and its agencies employ at each pay grade.

The Insolvency Service is an executive agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

As of 4th December 2010, The Insolvency Service employed 142 agency workers. These agency workers were employed at the following pay grades:

79 at civil service pay grade A2 or Administrative Officer and

63 at Insolvency Service examiner pay grade L3, which is the equivalent of civil service pay grade Higher Executive Officer.

Letter from John Alty, dated 6 December 2010:

I am responding in respect of the Intellectual Property Office to your Parliamentary Question tabled 30/11/2010, to the Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

The IPO which is an agency of BIS uses the equivalent of one AO from Agency.

Letter from Gareth Jones, dated 6 December 2010:

I am replying on behalf of Companies House to your Parliamentary Question tabled 30 November 2010, UIN 28501 to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Companies House employs two agency workers in the Band B pay grade to cover maternity leave.

Letter from Peter Mason, dated 10 December 2010:

I am responding in respect of the National Measurement Office (formerly National Weights and Measures Laboratory) to your Parliamentary Question tabled on 30 November (reference 2010/2797) to the Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, asking about the number of agency workers employed in the Department and its agencies.

Currently NMO has one individual working here who has been provided by an employment agency. That individual is covering a vacant post, whilst concerted efforts are being made to fill the post permanently.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the expenditure of his Department and its predecessor on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28390]

Mr Davey: Since the creation of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills on 5 June 2009 £69,016.56 has been spent on printing parliamentary publications. In addition £454,005.40 has been spent on printing other departmental publications.

Information relating to earlier expenditure by the Department's predecessors is not held centrally and could be assembled only at disproportionate expense.

Derby University

Pauline Latham: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the effects on the local economy of the student population attending the university of Derby. [29541]

Mr Willetts: The Government do not undertake assessments as outlined in your question. However, the university of Derby has, earlier this year, published a review entitled "The University of Derby's Impact on the local Economy" which shows that the 'student pound' spent in the local area is estimated to be worth in excess of £30 million per year. The report also highlighted the university's use of local suppliers and contractors and that, both directly and indirectly, it was responsible for over 3,200 full time jobs in the area. The following link will take my hon. Friend to the relevant report which I hope she will find informative:

http://www.derby.ac.uk/news/university-reveals-its-economic-impact

Digital Economy Act 2010

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) when he plans to publish the initial obligations code for Ofcom under the Digital Economy Act 2010; [29970]

(2) by what date he expects judicial review proceedings in respect of Ministerial decisions relating to the Digital Economy Act 2010 to have been concluded; [29971]

(3) when he plans to bring forward secondary legislation to implement the provisions of the Digital Economy Act 2010. [29973]

Mr Vaizey: Ofcom will shortly be publishing the initial obligations code under the Digital Economy Act 2010.

The judicial review proceedings in respect of the Digital Economy Act 2010 are currently scheduled in the court diary for 22-24 March 2011.

The draft costs-sharing statutory instrument relating to the Digital Economy Act 2010 is currently sitting with the European Commission under the Technical Standards Directive. The standstill period while member states and the Commission consider the draft ends on 23 December 2010. Should the standstill period end with no comment on the draft, we plan to introduce the statutory instrument to Parliament early in 2011. The initial obligations code, once published, will also be notified to the European Commission under the Technical Standards Directive before it can be laid in Parliament.

EU Internal Trade

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the total monetary value was of *(a)* exports from the UK to other EU countries and *(b)* imports to the UK from other EU countries in each of the last five years. [30169]

Mr Prisk: The data requested are shown in the following table:

£ million

	UK exports to EU			*UK imports from EU*		
	Goods and services	*Goods*	*Services*	*Goods and services*	*Goods*	*Services*
2005	171,181	121,486	49,695	208,553	158,163	50,390
2006	206,698	152,357	54,341	236,331	183,749	52,582
2007	189,655	127,813	61,842	224,890	169,799	55,091
2008	211,064	141,831	69,233	239,646	181,070	58,576
2009	188,041	124,427	63,614	216,902	162,140	54,762

Note:

Trade in goods figures have been affected by transactions associated with missing trader VAT fraud, especially in the first half of 2006.

Source:

ONS Balance of Payments Statistical Bulletin

Further Education: Finance

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills with reference to his Department's document, 'Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth', paragraph 46, whether he plans to establish a joint learner support fund for both 16-18 year olds and those aged 19 studying in further education and sixth form colleges. [29822]

Mr Hayes: Paragraph 26 of "Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth" gives details of the Government plan for learner support funds.

Officials within BIS and the Department for Education are working closely on the changes to be made to learner support for adults and young people respectively, with a view to aligning policy where it would be most appropriate.

Further Education: Overseas Students

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the rate of completion was for students studying in further education colleges who entered the UK under the student visa programme in the most recent year for which figures are available. [29823]

Mr Hayes: The completion rate in 2008/09, for all learners participating in Government-funded further education was 80.6%. Information is not collected centrally for learners in further education who entered the UK under the student visa programme.

Government-funded learning as recorded on the individualised learner record (ILR) is restricted to home learners. Therefore learners who are non-EEA (European economic area) nationals must have been resident in the UK for the three years preceding their course start date and the main purpose for residence was not to receive full-time education during any part of that three-year period. There are a limited number of exceptions to this, for example—refugees, learners with indefinite leave to remain status, or learners studying under reciprocal exchange agreements.

Growth and Innovation Fund

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills who he expects to chair the Growth and Innovation Fund. [30004]

Mr Hayes: I intend to establish a board under the chairmanship of one of the UK Commissioners for Employment and Skills to oversee the growth and innovation fund and identify projects to be supported through it.

Higher Education: Admissions

Liz Kendall: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many pupils eligible for free school meals took up a place at each university in *(a)* 2005-06, *(b)* 2006-07 and *(c)* 2007-08. [28176]

Mr Willetts: The information requested is shown in the table. These figures relate to pupils who were in receipt of free school meals (FSM). It is known that not all pupils who are eligible for FSM claim them. Such pupils would be excluded from the figures. These figures have been estimated using matched data from the National Pupil Database and the Higher Education Statistics Agency Student Record. These rounded estimates allow for a small margin of error that arises as result of the matching procedure deployed.

Estimates of the number of FSM pupils aged 15 in English maintained schools who progress to HE by age 19, by higher education institution

	FSM pupils		
UK Higher Education Institution	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*
The Open University	95	125	145
Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln	10	10	10
Buckinghamshire New University	70	70	70
Central School of Speech and Drama		—	—
University of Chester	60	75	85
Canterbury Christ Church University	50	50	55
York St John University	20	20	30
University College Plymouth St Mark and St John	15	10	5
Dartington College of Arts	5	5	—
Edge Hill University	80	110	120
University College Falmouth	10	10	15
Harper Adams University College	—	—	5
Homerton College	0	0	0
Kent Institute of Art and Design	—	0	0
The University of Winchester	20	25	30
Liverpool Hope University	100	95	100
University of the Arts, London	80	90	110
University of Bedfordshire	130	120	135
The University of Northampton	75	50	75
Newman College of Higher Education	30	35	50
Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication	15	20	15
Roehampton University	105	125	160
Rose Bruford College	—	—	—
Royal Academy of Music	0	0	-
Royal College of Music	0	0	0
Royal Northern College of Music			
Southampton Solent University	80	75	90
St Martin's College	40	45	45
St Mary's University College, Twickenham	25	30	40
Leeds Trinity and All Saints	25	35	15
Trinity Laban	-	0	-
Surrey Institute of Art and Design	0	0	0
The University of Worcester	20	25	30
Anglia Ruskin University	90	70	95
Bath Spa University	20	25	30
The University of Bolton	35	55	60
Bournemouth University	50	60	75
The University of Brighton	75	85	95
Birmingham City University	255	250	300
The University of Central Lancashire	250	215	220
University of Gloucestershire	30	35	30
Coventry University	170	170	150

Estimates of the number of FSM pupils aged 15 in English maintained schools who progress to HE by age 19, by higher education institution

	FSM pupils		
UK Higher Education Institution	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*
University of Derby	85	105	95
The University of East London	185	235	300
The University of Greenwich	270	275	265
University of Hertfordshire	270	280	310
The University of Huddersfield	165	185	175
The University of Lincoln	55	55	80
Kingston University	305	350	405
Leeds Metropolitan University	190	190	190
Liverpool John Moores University	235	275	300
The Manchester Metropolitan University	380	415	425
Middlesex University	285	290	335
De Montfort University	235	215	250
The University of Northumbria at Newcastle	110	110	130
The Nottingham Trent University	130	135	160
Oxford Brookes University	[illegible]	30	35
The University of Plymouth	115	105	100
The University of Portsmouth	90	85	100
Sheffield Hallam University	140	195	190
London South Bank University	150	185	215
Staffordshire University	60	50	90
The University of Sunderland	75	100	110
The University of Teesside	145	130	175
Thames Valley University	95	120	105
University of the West of England, Bristol	85	85	85
The University of Chichester	20	25	25
The University of Westminster	425	420	425
Wimbledon School of Art	5	0	0
The University of Wolverhampton	245	295	275
The University of Wales, Newport	—	10	—
The North-East Wales Institute of Higher Education	10	10	—
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff	10	5	10
University of Glamorgan	20	15	15
Swansea Institute of Higher Education	10	5	5
Trinity College, Carmarthen	—	—	—
University of Abertay Dundee	0	0	5
Edinburgh College of Art	—	—	0
Glasgow School of Art	—	—	0
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	—	—	
The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama	0	0	
The Robert Gordon University	—	—	—
The University of Paisley	—	0	5
Glasgow Caledonian University	—	—	
Napier University	—	—	—
Aston University	120	95	160
The University of Bath	20	15	15
The University of Birmingham	120	100	125
The University of Bradford	185	220	260
The University of Bristol	25	20	25
Brunei University	170	190	255
The University of Cambridge	25	20	20
The City University	125	160	160
University of Durham	25	30	35
The University of East Anglia	40	35	50
The University of Essex	50	70	65
The University of Exeter	30	15	25
The University of Hull	75	75	90
The University of Keele	50	50	40
The University of Kent	75	75	95
The University of Lancaster	40	40	50
The University of Leeds	85	105	100
The University of Leicester	55	55	55

Estimates of the number of FSM pupils aged 15 in English maintained schools who progress to HE by age 19, by higher education institution

	FSM pupils		
UK Higher Education Institution	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*
The University of Liverpool	100	90	105
Birkbeck College	—	10	20
Goldsmiths College	70	100	105
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	35	45	35
Institute of Education	0	0	0
King's College London	100	120	125
London School of Economics and Political Science	25	30	15
Queen Mary and Westfield College	195	250	325
Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	35	35	40
The Royal Veterinary College			
St George's Hospital Medical School	10	25	25
The School of Oriental and African Studies	20	35	35
The School of Pharmacy	20	15	15
University College London	75	50	60
University of London (Institutes and activities)	0	0	0
Loughborough University	30	50	50
The University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	25	35	40
The University of Nottingham	45	55	70
The University of Oxford	20	25	20
The University of Reading	35	40	40
The University of Salford	200	155	200
The University of Sheffield	55	55	75
The University of Southampton	40	45	45
The University of Surrey	35	35	45
The University of Sussex	30	35	55
The University of Warwick	20	30	30
The University of York	25	15	25
The University of Edinburgh	10	—	5
The University of Glasgow	5	—	5
The University of Strathclyde	—	—	0
The University of Aberdeen	10	10	10
Heriot Watt University		5	
The University of Dundee	—	5	—
The University of St Andrews	5	5	
The University of Stirling	5	10	10
Scottish Agricultural College	0	0	0
The University of Wales, Lampeter	10	5	
Aberystwyth University	25	30	25
Bangor University	20	20	15
Cardiff University	25	20	20
Swansea University	20	15	15
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama	—	—	5
The Queen's University of Belfast	—	—	
University of Ulster	5	5	—
Writtle College	—	5	10
Norwich School of Art and Design	5	5	0
Cumbria Institute of the Arts	5	10	0
St. Mary's University College		0	0
Royal Agricultural College	0	0	0
UHI Millennium Institute	—	—	—
The Arts Institute at Bournemouth	10	5	15
Bell College	—	—	0
Conservatoire for Dance and Drama	5	—	5
Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies	35	55	55
Courtauld Institute of Art	0	0	0
London Metropolitan University	300	315	295
The University of Buckingham	—	—	0
The University of Manchester	140	145	155
Heythrop College	0	—	5
The University College for the Creative Arts	30	40	70

Estimates of the number of FSM pupils aged 15 in English maintained schools who progress to HE by age 19, by higher education institution

	FSM pupils		
UK Higher Education Institution	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*
Leeds College of Music	0	0	
Guildhall School of Music and Drama	0	0	
The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts	0	5	0
University Campus Suffolk	0	0	15
Overall total FSM pupils	10,060	10,720	11,905

Notes:

1. All figures are estimates and have been rounded to the nearest five, figures less than five are shown as ' ', zero counts are shown as '0'.
2. The figures for FSM pupils are based on those recorded as such on Pupil Level Census. As this is a snapshot of pupils in one year, this will exclude pupils who claimed free school meals in previous years. Also some parents may choose not to apply for FSM. Children from these families who progress to HE institutions would not be included in the table.

Source:

Matched data from the National Pupil Database, the Higher Education Statistics Agency Student Record and the Learning and Skills Council Individualised Learner Record.

Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills for what reasons the new access commitments by universities are to apply no earlier than October 2012. [28595]

Mr Willetts: The arrangements for new access agreements and the £150 million National Scholarship Programme are being introduced to coincide with the new funding arrangements for students in 2012.

Universities, schools and colleges have learned much from Aimhigher about "what works". Universities already use this to inform their own outreach activities covered by existing access agreements, agreed with the Office for Fair Access, and the widening participation strategic assessments they submit to HEFCE. Helping young people find out about higher education is a normal part of what schools do and schools will receive additional support through the pupil premium from April 2011. In this context we have concluded transitional funding is unnecessary.

The National Scholarship Programme will form part of a package of measures to support disadvantaged young people through their education, including the introduction of the £2.5 billion pupil premium in April 2011, that will help to encourage young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to apply to Higher Education.

Higher Education: Sunderland

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many students from Sunderland entered higher education between 1997 and 2010. [29630]

Mr Willetts: The latest available information on the numbers of entrants from Sunderland local authority to higher education courses at UK higher education institutions is shown in the following table.

Figures for the 2009/10 academic year will become available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency in January 2011. Comparable local authority-level information on entrants to higher education courses at further education colleges is not available.

Entrants[1] from Sunderland local authority[2]: UK higher education institutions[3], academic years 1997/98 to 2008/09

Academic year	*Entrants*
1997/98	2,045
1998/99	2,355
1999/2000	2,195
2000/01	2,170
2001/02	2,490
2002/03	2,575
2003/04	2,685
2004/05	2,805
2005/06	3,100
2006/07	3,000
2007/08	2,930
2008/09	3,645

[1] Covers undergraduate and postgraduate entrants of all ages to full-time and part-time courses.

[2] Figures in the table do not include entrants where the local authority of the student cannot be established due to missing or invalid postcode information.

[3] Excludes the Open University due to inconsistencies in their coding of students across the time series.

Note:

Figures are on a HESA snapshot basis as at 31 December and are rounded to the nearest five.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record

Insolvency

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many complaints have been received by the Insolvency Service in respect of insolvency practitioners and administrators in each of the last 10 years. [30180]

Mr Davey: The Insolvency Service does not have the information requested for the full period.

Most insolvency practitioners are authorised and regulated by one of seven recognised professional bodies, though the Secretary of State does directly authorise a small number of practitioners.

Of the complaints against insolvency practitioners authorised by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, that information is only available since 2003 and is summarised as follows:

	Number of complaints	*Of which: Relate to administration*
2003-05	202	8
2006	62	8

	Number of complaints	*Of which: Relate to administration*
2007	89	10
2008	73	10
2009	66	13

Since 2009 the Insolvency Service has published an Annual Review of Insolvency Practitioner Regulation, which includes details of the number of complaints received by the recognised professional bodies and the Insolvency Service. The reports published to date show that in 2009 there were a total of 618 complaints against insolvency practitioners (2008: 828), of which 181 relate to complaints against insolvency practitioners acting as administrators (2008: 197). The next report, covering the 2010 calendar year, will be published in 2011.

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the amount of money which was owed to unsecured creditors by firms in liquidation in each of the last four years. [30182]

Mr Davey: The Insolvency Service does not collate a total figure for the amount due to unsecured creditors by firms in liquidation. However, The service's most recent profiling report for companies in compulsory liquidation shows that the average debt owed by companies in compulsory liquidation was £584,134 for the year 2008/09.

Figures for the years 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08 were given in response to an earlier question (2009/54).

The service is in the process of obtaining information in respect of compulsory liquidations for 2009/10 and I will provide a supplementary answer to the House when I have received the necessary information.

Regional Growth Fund

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on what dates and at what locations roadshows to promote the regional growth fund have been held to date. [30001]

Mr Prisk: So far regional growth fund roadshows have been held in:

Taunton: 19 November 2010
Liverpool: 3 December 2010
Darlington: 6 December 2010

Details of forthcoming roadshows can be found on the regional growth fund webpage at:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/regional-economic-development/regional-growth-fund

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many bids for funding from the regional growth fund have been received from individuals and organisations *(a)* based in each region and *(b)* in total to date. [30002]

Mr Prisk: The closing date for applications to the fund is 21 January 2011, to date no bids have been received.

Science: Females

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of funding allocations made from the Science and Society budget in increasing the number of women participating in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. [29659]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* The principal allocations from the Science and Society budget to increase the number of women participating in science, technology, engineering and mathematics support the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (UKRC) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network (STEMNET).

In April 2008 the Tavistock Institute published an evaluation of UKRC on behalf of the then Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills. The recent National Audit Office report, 'Educating the Next Generation of Scientists', showed that the STEMNET Ambassador scheme is associated with a statistically significant improvement in take-up and achievement in science and mathematics.

STEMNET's remit is to enthuse young people to study STEM, and across the population this would mean significant numbers of extra girls taking up these subjects. STEMNET seeks to ensure that it targets all equality groups through the diversity of its STEM Ambassador profile, and interaction with less engaged and hard-to-reach schools.

Both programmes are routinely reviewed against their agreed objectives on a quarterly basis.

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what proportion of the Science and Society budget was spent on initiatives to improve the gender balance in scientific fields in each of the last three years. [29660]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* Many of the initiatives funded from the Science and Society budget have objectives on gender diversity. Funding for these initiatives over the last three years is as follows.

£ million

	2008/09	*2009/10*	*2010/11*
Big Bang Fair	0.15	0.35	0.35
National Science and Engineering Competition	0.15	0.26	0.26
National Science and Engineering Week	0.47	0.47	0.54
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network (STEMNET)	5.85	6.30	6.79
UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology	2.54	2.44	2.47
Women in Science, Engineering and Construction (WISE)	0.04	0.04	0.04

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the gender balance among scientific staff of each organisation which has received funding from the Science in Society funding stream in each of the last three years. [29661]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* Few organisations funded from the science and society budget employ staff as scientists. Neither the coalition, nor the previous Government have asked the organisations to provide any breakdown of their staff by either job type or gender.

Scientific Advisers

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) whether the *(a)* Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees and *(b)* Principles for the Treatment of Independent Scientific Advice, will apply to scientific advisory committees which are being (i) retained and (ii) reconstituted in each ground referred to in the document entitled Public Bodies Reform—Proposals for Change; [29693]

(2) what mechanisms will be in place to ensure the independence of scientific advisory committees which are to be reconstituted within Departments as committees of experts; [29694]

(3) what the evidential basis was for the distinction made between those scientific advisory committees to be *(a)* retained and *(b)* reconstituted in the document entitled Public Bodies Reform—Proposals for Change; [29695]

(4) what effects the grounds on which scientific advisory committees have been *(a)* retained and *(b)* reconstituted will have on the responsibilities of the chairs of these committees. [29696]

Mr Willetts: The Government fully recognise the importance of science and engineering advice to the delivery of its policies and the important role that Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs), and the independent advisers that sit on them, play in ensuring that the best advice is available.

The Public Bodies Reform process was undertaken to ensure that central Government is not carrying out functions which are no longer needed, to consider where there is duplication of effort and where lines of accountability for decisions which should be taken by Ministers needs to be strengthened.

Scientific advisory non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) were included in the process along with all the other bodies. Reforming the way Government obtain scientific and technical advice, through using committees of experts in some cases, will reinforce transparency and accountability and provide for stronger co-ordination, while allowing Government to have continued access to independent, authoritative and cost-effective advice to support its policies.

The changes proposed to specific SACs were decisions for the Department to which that SAC reports and were considered on a case-by-case basis.

The guidance to Departments in implementing the changes is clear that SACs, whether being retained as NDPBs or being reconstituted, should continue to operate in line with the Principles of Scientific Advice to Government and the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees. These set out clearly the importance of such committees operating independently and transparently. The changes themselves should not have an impact on the responsibilities of the chairs of SACs.

Space Technology

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps he plans to take to ensure gender balance in the composition of *(a)* the Space Leadership Council and *(b)* other boards and committees associated with the UK Space Agency. [30142]

Mr Willetts: As the membership of the Space Leadership Council changes over time, the Department will work to ensure a good gender balance in membership although appointments will of course be on merit.

The advisory structure of the Space Agency is being reviewed. Where members need to be appointed to new boards and committees, this will be done in line with relevant procedures and will be based around appointing the best possible people.

Students: Fees and Charges

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether his Department has issued guidance to universities on the application to them of competition law in respect of price-setting. [29708]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* The Department and its agencies have not issued any guidance to higher education institutions (HEI) on this matter. We are considering whether any specific guidance for HEIs on the setting of tuition fees and competition law is required.

Students: Loans

Lorely Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many former students had student loan repayments taken via PAYE after they had repaid in full a loan to the Student Loan Company in each of the last five years; and what proportion of loans that were repaid in full were affected in each such year. [27918]

Mr Willetts: The requested information is not available, except at disproportionate cost.

It is, regrettably, possible for borrowers to over-repay their student loans because of the loan collection process. After the end of each tax year, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) notifies the Student Loans Company (SLC) of loan deductions made by employers in the previous tax year. Due to this time lag, it is possible for people to over-repay. However, all overpayments are refunded with interest.

Since December 2009, in order to reduce the number of those who over-repay, borrowers nearing the end of their loan repayment term are notified by the SLC that they may opt out of the PAYE system, and complete their loan repayments by direct debit. Additionally, borrowers are advised to monitor their own repayments so they can calculate when they are likely to repay their loan in full.

Work Experience

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps he is taking to encourage private and public sector employers to provide paid internships to recent graduates. [29844]

Mr Willetts: The coalition Government are committed to supporting the creation of internships as part of the wider programme to get Britain working. We continue to encourage employers to offer work experience and internships to help graduates develop valuable skills and boost their employment chances.

Employers can advertise internship vacancies without charge on the Graduate Talent Pool website, and over 27,000 vacancies have now been advertised. There are currently 3,129 vacancies available, 1,958 of which are paid.

HEALTH

Abortion

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 6 September 2010, *Official Report*, columns 228-9W, on abortion, when he expects to write to the hon. Member for Southend West; and if he will make a statement. [29840]

Anne Milton: I have written to my hon. Friend the Member for Southend West today and will place a copy of the letter in the Library.

Animal Products: Clones

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on the sale and labelling of products containing material from cloned animals or the offspring of cloned animals; and what advice he has received on the matter from the Food Standards Agency. [29646]

Anne Milton: Any food obtained from cloned animals is regulated as a "novel food" under Regulation (EC) No 258/97[1]. According to this regulation, novel foods may not be marketed in the European Union without an authorisation. Applications for authorisation of novel foods are evaluated by national authorities against criteria of safety, nutritional quality and not misleading the consumer. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is the competent authority for novel foods in the United Kingdom and advises that food obtained from the offspring of cloned animals also falls within the scope of Regulation (EC) 258/97. However, the legislation could also be interpreted to apply only to food from cloned animals themselves. The FSA is seeking views of interested parties on a change to its advice on the application of this regulation to the offspring of cloned cattle and pigs.

In October 2010 the European Commission published a report on animal cloning which recommended a temporary ban on the marketing of products obtained from cloned animals. The Government's view is that such a ban would be disproportionate in terms of food safety and animal welfare and insufficient evidence has been provided to justify it. Any proposal should be supported by an impact assessment that demonstrates the need for and benefit of new regulation. The Commission's report does not identify the need for any future controls on food from the offspring of cloned animals, which is in line with the Government's view.

The Board of the FSA discussed animal cloning at its open meeting on 7 December and has subsequently advised Ministers that the marketing of products obtained from cloned animals should be subject to authorisation as novel foods but, based on the current evidence, there are no food safety grounds for regulating foods from the descendants of cloned cattle and pigs.

In respect of other consumer interests, the Board agreed that, for food safety purposes, mandatory labelling of meat and milk obtained from the descendants of cloned cattle and pigs would be unnecessary and disproportionate, providing no significant food safety benefit to consumers. However, the Board recognised the high level of public concern over the use of cloning and has asked Ministers to consider what information should be provided to the public about the ethics and welfare implications of animal cloning.

[1] Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council concerning novel foods and novel food ingredients.

Asthma: Health Services

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to improve the standards of management of asthma in the NHS; what recent assessment he has made of the extent to which standards of asthma management vary between primary care trusts areas; what statistics his Department holds on emergency hospital admissions for asthma-related conditions in each primary care trust area in the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [29620]

Paul Burstow: The NHS White Paper, "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS", sets out the Government's long-term vision for the future of the national health service and focuses on improving outcomes for patients. We are also particularly committed to improve outcomes for people with respiratory diseases, including asthma. A great deal of activity is already in hand across the NHS to improve outcomes for people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma, and we will continue to work with key organisations and with clinical leads for COPD and asthma to make sure that change happen.

The statistics requested on emergency hospital admissions for asthma-related conditions in each primary care trust area in the last three years have been placed in the Library.

Baby Care Units

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS medical facilities have implemented the *(a)* Toolkit for High Quality Neonatal Services and *(b)* Quality Standards in Specialist Neonatal Care from the 2011-12 NHS Operating Framework. [29548]

Anne Milton: This information is not collected by the Department. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence Quality Standard for Specialist Neonatal Care and the Toolkit for High Quality Neonatal Services are valuable tools to assist national health service commissioners and providers in the provision of high quality care for babies and their families.

Bassetlaw Hospital: Childbirth

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many births there were at Bassetlaw hospital in each of the last 10 years; and how many such births required consultant intervention. [29743]

Anne Milton: This information is not available in the format requested. However, the number of women giving birth at Bassetlaw hospital, in the period from 2000-01 to 2009-10, is 12,912. This differs from the number of births, as it does not include multiple births, such as twins.

It is not possible to say from these figures how many specifically required consultant intervention because, while every woman having an intervention will be under consultant care, some of the instrumental deliveries will have been done by doctors in training without reference to the consultant. Additionally a number of the women having normal deliveries will have been under consultant care for other medical reasons but not required medical intervention for delivery.

Campylobacter

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many incidents of food poisoning caused by campylobacter contamination there were in each of the last five years. [29832]

Anne Milton: The term "incidents" of food poisoning has been interpreted to mean "outbreaks" involving foodborne transmission. An outbreak is defined as an incident in which two or more people, thought to have a common exposure, experience a similar illness or have a proven infection.

The following table provides information on the number of general outbreaks of campylobacter involving foodborne transmission reported in the United Kingdom, 2005 to 2009, together with the total number of laboratory confirmed campylobacter cases in each year.

	Number of campylobacter outbreaks (UK)			
	All outbreaks	*Outbreaks of foodborne transmission*	*Number of cases associated with foodborne outbreaks*	*Total number of laboratory confirmed campylobacter cases (UK)*
2005	9	8	116	52,171
2006	0	0	0	52,670
2007	3	3	54	58,066
2008	7	4	42	55,735
2009	18	15	318	[1]65,164
Total	37	30	530	283,806

[1] Data for Scotland and Northern Ireland is provisional and may be subject to further change.

Source:

Health Protection Agency, electronic Foodborne and non-Foodborne Gastrointestinal Outbreak Surveillance System (HPA eFOSS) Health Protection Scotland (HPS) Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre Northern Ireland (CDSCNI).

Campylobacter is more often associated with sporadic cases of illness rather than outbreaks; as such the data on total number of laboratory confirmed cases are also provided for information.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on reducing the incidence of food poisoning caused by contamination by the campylobacter bacterium. [29833]

Anne Milton: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) leads on Government policy for the reduction of foodborne illness. Since its inception in 2000, the reduction of foodborne illness, including illness caused by campylobacter, has been one of the FSA's key objectives.

The FSA's policy on reducing the incidence of food poisoning caused by campylobacter is to reduce the levels of campylobacter in chicken as a priority. This is a priority because the handling, preparation and consumption of chicken may account for 20% to 30% of human cases of campylobacteriosis, while 50% to 80% may be attributed to the chicken reservoir as a whole. The FSA food chain analysis project, which looked at risk from primary production to retail, concluded that the greatest risk of campylobacter infection for people is from poultry meat, and hazards arise across the food chain that can result in the introduction of campylobacter into food.

In order to reduce campylobacter, the FSA has developed a Campylobacter Risk Management Programme, which encompasses a range of Government/industry partnership led projects targeted at different points across the food chain and coordinated through a joint action plan. To measure progress on the effectiveness of our Campylobacter Risk Management Programme the FSA has agreed a new target with industry for the reduction of campylobacter in United Kingdom-produced raw chicken, to be achieved in a phased approach by April 2015. The target will be published in December 2010.

The aim of the target is to reduce the levels of the most highly contaminated whole chickens at the end of the slaughter process. This reflects the fact that the degree of contamination on birds is most relevant to their risk to public health, with a high level of contamination posing the highest risk for human illness.

In addition to working with industry, the FSA's Food Hygiene Campaign works to promote awareness of safe food handling and preparation with consumers in the home and in catering settings.

Care Homes: Standards

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many care homes have been rated poor quality since 2000; how many of those have closed; and how many of those which had closed have subsequently re-opened. [29546]

Paul Burstow: The Care Quality Commission has provided the following information:

The following table shows a snapshot of the number of care homes rated poor since quality ratings were introduced in 2008, and the number that have subsequently been de-registered.

Quality ratings were not used by the National Care Standards Commission; they were introduced by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) in May 2008, therefore CQC does not hold historical ratings before that period.

De-registration is the term CQC uses to describe cancelling registrations. CQC is only able to provide data on de-registrations, which do not necessarily equate to the physical closure of the care home. CQC has provided the number of de-registrations for care homes rated poor, broken down year by year. Once a care home has been de-registered, it may close or continue to operate if taken over by another provider. This other provider must demonstrate that it is complying and will continue to comply with the regulatory requirements.

			Number of "poor" care homes subsequently de-registered			
Data as at	*Care homes rated "poor"*	*Organisation that produced rating*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*2010-11*
8 May 2008	582	CSCI	4	63	34	18
8 April 2009	358	[1]CQC		3	44	19
8 April 2010	277	[1]CQC			3	33

[1] Rating may be the result of an inspection carried out prior to 1 April 2009, so therefore whilst CSCI was still in existence. All ratings were made while homes were registered under the Care Standards Act (2000).

The CQC is the independent regulator of health and adult social care, established by the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (the 2008 Act).

The new registration system for private and voluntary health care and adult social care providers of regulated activities under the 2008 Act came into effect from 1 October this year. For residential care homes, the new registration system replaces the previous registration system under the Care Standards Act (the 2000 Act).

From 1 October 2010, to be registered and remain registered, providers must comply with 16 registration requirements relating to essential levels of safety and quality, which are set out in regulations. Failure to comply with the requirements is an offence, and CQC has a range of independent enforcement powers that it can exercise. CQC's enforcement policy sets out how it uses its enforcement powers—this has been developed, consulted on, and published by CQC. It replaces the previous enforcement policy CQC had developed to support the 2000 Act registration system.

CQC does not hold all the information requested centrally, and it could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to publish the national clinical strategy for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. [29740]

Mr Simon Burns: The reforms set out in "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS" will ensure that the national health service focuses on improving outcomes for patients. As a result, we are looking at the role and nature of clinical strategies within the reformed NHS to ensure that they reflect this focus. We will make further announcements in due course. In the meantime we will continue to work with key organisations and with clinical leads for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma. A great deal of activity is already in hand across the NHS to improve outcomes for people with COPD and asthma as a result of the work undertaken so far.

Compulsorily Detained Mental Patients

Mr Charles Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether decisions made by mental health tribunals on sectioned patients are binding on those *(a)* clinicians and *(b)* clinical institutions that are responsible for their welfare and treatment; and if he will make a statement. [29688]

Paul Burstow: Under the Mental Health Act 1983, tribunals have the power to discharge patients from liability to detention in hospital and from supervised community treatment and guardianship. Those decisions are binding on all concerned.

While a tribunal's decision to discharge does not prevent the re-detention of the patient in accordance with the Act, case-law has established that only in limited circumstances would that be a proper course of action in the period immediately following the tribunal's decision.

In certain cases, a tribunal may defer a decision to order the conditional discharge of a patient while arrangements are made to satisfy the conditions it believes are necessary for that discharge. Case-law has established that health and social services must use their best endeavours to put in place the arrangements needed to allow the conditional discharge to take effect. But there is no absolute duty to implement the arrangements the tribunal has in mind, and the tribunal cannot order clinicians to treat patients against their clinical judgment.

In other cases, if it decides not to discharge a patient, a tribunal may make certain recommendations about the future treatment of the patient, including a recommendation that a patient be transferred to another hospital. Those recommendations are not binding, but the tribunal may, if it wishes, further consider the case if its recommendations are not acted on.

Dental Services

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the population resident in *(a)* England and *(b)* Berkshire West NHS Primary Care Trust area was registered with an NHS dentist in each of the last 10 years. [29997]

Mr Simon Burns: Information is not available in the format requested.

The percentage of the population registered with a national health service dentist in England, as at 31 March, 1997 to 2006 is available in annex B of the "NHS Dental Activity and Workforce Report", England: 31 March 2006. Information is provided by primary care trust (PCT) and by strategic health authority (SHA), for 2001 onwards and uses the boundary structures as at 31 March 2006.

This information is based on the previous contractual arrangements which were in place up to and including 31 March 2006. This report, published on 23 August 2006, has already been placed in the Library and is also available on the NHS Information Centre website at:

www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/dwfactivity

Under the current dental contractual arrangements, introduced on 1 April 2006, patients do not have to be registered with an NHS dentist to receive NHS care. The closest equivalent measure to 'registration' is the number of patients receiving NHS dental services ('patients seen') over a 24 month period. However, this is not directly comparable to the registration data for earlier years.

Information on the number of patients seen in the previous 24 months as a percentage of the population, in England, is available in table D2 of annex 3 of the NHS "Dental Statistics for England: 2010/11, First quarterly report". Information is available at quarterly intervals, from 31 March 2006 to 30 September 2010 and is provided by PCT and SHA, using the boundary structures as at 1 April 2010.

This report, published on 24 November 2010, has already been placed in the Library and is also available on the NHS Information Centre website at:

www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/dentalstats1011q1

Departmental Energy

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost was of *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas supplied to his Department's offices at Richmond house in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [29674]

Mr Simon Burns: The cost of electricity and gas supplied at Richmond house in each of the last 12 months is as follows:

	£
Electricity	
November 2009	23,499.03
December 2009	24,887.47
January 2010	26,190.26
February 2010	22,785.91
March 2010	24,495.91
April 2010	16,629.56
May 2010	17,583.37
June 2010	17,355.24
July 2010	20,021.29
August 2010	17,687.64
September 2010	16,429.47
October 2010	18,973.94
Gas	
November 2009	4,058.07
December 2009	5,226.51
January 2010	6,991.56
February 2010	5,033.58
March 2010	4,641.14
April 2010	2,420.18
May 2010	1,508.53
June 2010	1,241.55
July 2010	1,252.19
August 2010	1,248.65
September 2010	1,132.29
October 2010	2,146.40

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28842]

Mr Simon Burns: The core Department, excluding its agencies and arm's length bodies, spent £699,208 in 2008-09 and £867,086 in 2009-10 on its grey fleet.

Disability: Health Services

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent consideration he has given to the recommendations of the report 'Raising our sights: services for adults with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities'. [29736]

Paul Burstow: Departmental officials are currently looking very carefully at the detailed recommendations set out in this report and how these support our objectives to improve outcomes for people with learning disabilities who have complex needs and their families. The elements of good service and good practice examples included in this report sit very clearly within the programme of work which Government are leading to support independent living for people with learning disabilities and to support local service planning and commissioning to meet identified needs in their locality.

We envisage that we should be in a position to give a formal departmental response by the end of the year.

Food: Marketing

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations his Department has received on the marketing, advertising and promotion of food and drink high in fat, salt or sugar in the non-broadcast media. [29796]

Anne Milton: On 7 October, during a House of Lords debate on the role of regulation and guidance in the food chain and of standards in improving nutritional outcomes for adults and children, my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Earl Howe) received representations on the advertising to children of food and drink high in fat, salt or sugar in the non-broadcast media. There have been no other recent representations on the marketing, advertising and promotion of food and drink high in fat, salt or sugar in the non-broadcast media.

Health Services: Devolution

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings he has had with Health Ministers in the devolved Administrations since his appointment. [29792]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department maintains close relations with officials in the devolved Administrations and Ministers are in regular correspondence with their counterparts in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Secretary of State for Health has met Michael McGimpsey in Belfast and Edwina Hart in Cardiff and plans to visit Scotland in the new year to meet Nicola Sturgeon.

Heroin

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many heroin addicts were *(a)* admitted to hospital for a drug-related health issue and *(b)* under GP supervision in each of the last three years. [29651]

Anne Milton: The precise information requested is not collected centrally.

Hospital admission data are not able to identify a patient as a heroin user, as it is not possible to limit diagnoses to heroin specifically as it forms part of a larger classification of opiates.

It is also not possible to identify the number of heroin addicts under general practitioner (GP) supervision. The National Drug Treatment Monitoring System collects information on the number of people receiving substitute prescribing interventions for opioid dependence in England, however, these interventions can be delivered by a specialist GP or a community drug service and does not show under whose supervision the client is.

Infant Mortality: East Midlands

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what date a national support team most recently visited *(a)* Doncaster and *(b)* Bassetlaw hospital concerning infant mortality; and for what reason in each case. [29780]

Anne Milton: I understand that the Infant Mortality National Support Team (NST) visited Doncaster between 19 and 23 October 2009. The visit was to the Doncaster area, not the Doncaster and Bassetlaw hospitals, although staff from Doncaster and Bassetlaw hospitals took part in the process.

The purpose of the visit was to improve infant and child health outcomes and reduce inequalities in the area. The NST works with local teams to help them develop clear action plans based on local needs.

The visit was part of a series to local areas with the highest number of infant deaths in disadvantaged groups.

IVF

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance his Department issues on the number of cycles of in vitro fertilisation treatment available to couples through the NHS. [29488]

Anne Milton: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced guidelines on fertility treatment in 2004, which stated that eligible couples where the woman is aged between 23 and 39 should receive three cycles of in vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatment.

The Department produced guidance for national health service commissioners on 22 August 2008 drawing their attention to recommendations from the Expert Group on Commissioning NHS Infertility Provision. The Department also reminded commissioners that they should have regard to the NICE guideline about fertility, in particular its recommendation that up to three cycles of IVF be offered to eligible couples.

Lung Diseases

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consideration he gave to the draft National Strategy for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Asthma in England prior to his Department's publication of *(a)* his Department's White Paper on Liberating the NHS and *(b)* Transparency in Outcomes framework; and if he will make a statement. [29739]

Mr Simon Burns: We will shortly publish our response to the recent consultations on the "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS" White Paper and on the Transparency in Outcomes Framework. The objective of the proposed reforms set out in both documents is to improve care quality, and therefore outcomes for all patients in England, including those with long-term conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma.

Memory Clinics

Paul Blomfield: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his most recent estimate is of the average waiting time from referral to consultation at a memory clinic in *(a)* England and *(b)* a (i) rural and (ii) urban area. [30345]

Paul Burstow: The Government believe that early diagnosis of dementia through established or new memory services for diagnosing dementia ensure that those with dementia receive the right care and that they and their carers are given access to other avenues of post diagnostic support and help. Clinicians have an important part to play and are responsible for referring those showing early signs of dementia to these services in the early stages of the disease so that they can gain maximum benefit.

The Department does not collect the information requested and we are unable therefore to estimate the average waiting time from referral to consultation at a memory clinic in England and rural and urban areas.

Mental Health Services: Ex-servicemen

Mr Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what provision is being made in the NHS for the mental health needs of former military personnel recently returned from active duty. [30050]

Mr Simon Burns: The Government are committed to providing effective, through-life, mental health services for our service and ex-service personnel.

The Prime Minister asked my hon. Friend the Member for South West Wiltshire (Dr Murrison) to conduct an independent study into the provision of Ministry of Defence and national health service support and services to the armed forces and ex-service personnel and to make recommendations for improvement, particularly in the area of mental health.

His report, "Fighting Fit", has been welcomed by the Government and his recommendations regarding veterans are being taken forward by the Department.

These include an additional 30 full-time NHS staff to work with veterans, access to an online counselling service, improved training for general practitioners and better information to veterans themselves about how they can obtain help.

Progress on these and other measures will be assessed in autumn 2011.

Muscular Dystrophy: Physiotherapy

Jason McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made on improving the provision of specialist neuromuscular physiotherapy for people with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions; and if he will make a statement. [29737]

Paul Burstow: Physiotherapy can help manage the physical deterioration associated with muscular dystrophy and other neuromuscular conditions.

Physiotherapists have a key role to play in reducing waiting times, improving access and choice, providing more personalised services closer to home, improving the quality of life of their patients. It is for local national health service organisations to decide how best to use the funds allocated to them to meet health needs.

National Spinal Cord Injury Strategy Board

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress his Department has made on establishing the National Spinal Cord Injury Strategy Board. [29666]

Paul Burstow: The National Spinal Cord Injury Strategy Board (NSCISB) was established in March 2010 and has met four times. Membership includes the eight specialised spinal cord injury centres in England, the 10 specialised commissioning groups, service users and other stakeholders.

Information about the NSCISB can be found at:

www.secscg.nhs.uk/home/national-spinal-cord-injury-strategy-board

NHS Litigation Authority

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases the National Health Service Litigation Authority ended by settlement after *(a)* the case was set down for trial and *(b)* a defence denying liability was served in each of the last three years; [28776]

(2) how many cases the National Health Service Litigation Authority has *(a)* successfully and *(b)* unsuccessfully defended at full trial in each of the last three years. [28777]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department has not made an estimate because the information is not available centrally and can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

NHS: Negligence

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to amend the present system of claims for lower-value clinical negligence cases. [29413]

Mr Simon Burns: Following the publication of Lord Young of Graffham's report, 'Common Sense Common Safety' (Cabinet Office, October 2010), the Department is exploring with the Ministry of Justice how the Road Traffic Accident Scheme can be extended to cover low value clinical negligence claims.

NHS: Pay

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was paid to officials in each *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* strategic health authority in bonuses in each of the last five years. [27491]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department holds some information on performance related pay for very senior managers (chief executives, executive directors and other senior managers with board level responsibility) that are employed by strategic health authorities (SHAs) on the pay framework for very senior managers, which was introduced in 2006. A copy of the framework has been placed in the Library.

The Department does not hold information on performance related pay for very senior managers employed in primary care trusts (PCTs), other groups of national health service staff not covered by the pay framework, or NHS staff employed on local arrangements which were in place before the introduction of the pay framework.

The performance related pay scheme which applied to SHA very senior managers in the period from 2007-08 (to recognise performance in 2006-07) to 2010-11 (to recognise performance in 2009-10) was in the form of non-consolidated, non-pensionable one off payments. As explained in the pay framework, payments are authorised subject to the approval of the 'grandparent' organisation. For very senior managers in SHAs this is the Department of Health.

The value of the performance related pay pot is subject to affordability and an absolute ceiling that the total cost of performance related pay must not exceed 5% of the reckonable pay bill for all very senior managers within the relevant bonus pool. For the 2006-07 performance year, the Department operated a national performance related pay pool, whereby the combined total of performance related pay for all very senior managers in SHAs was not allowed to be in excess of the 5% ceiling of total SHA very senior manager pay bill. In subsequent years, the pool was at an individual organisational level, rather than national.

Where an organisation fails to meet its financial control target, all of its very senior managers will be treated as 'Category D—not satisfactory' performers and will not receive an annual uplift or performance related pay.

The table shows the total amount of performance related pay paid to the very senior managers employed on the pay framework in each SHA, and the value of the performance related pay as a percentage of each SHA's total very senior manager pay bill. We understand that some very senior managers may have chosen not to receive performance related pay.

The table also shows the value of the total amount of performance related pay paid to all SHA very senior managers in each year, and the value of the total performance related pay as a percentage of the total SHA very senior manager pay bill.

SHA	*2006-07 (in recognition of performance in 2005-06)*	*2007-08 (in recognition of performance in 2006-07)*	*2008-09 (in recognition of performance in 2007-08)*	*2009-10 (in recognition of performance in 2008-09)*	*2010-11 (in recognition of performance in 2009-10)*
NHS East of England					
£	n/a	0	36,839	38,339	34,198
%	n/a	0	4.13	4.99	3.23
NHS East Midland					
£	n/a	37,125	37,781	33,630	11,455
%	n/a	3.98	4	3.56	1.04
NHS London					
£	n/a	1,894	17,854	61,160	29,106
%	n/a	1.5	1.17	3.07	1.73
NHS North East					
£	n/a	30,721	14,980	22,286	18,296
%	n/a	7	4.72	5	4.4
NHS North West					
£	n/a	36,931	32,218	21,696	28,828
%	n/a	4.74	3.02	2.22	2.43
NHS South Central					
£	n/a	17,118	22,048	14,017	0
%	n/a	2.14	2.66	1.91	0
NHS South East Coast					
£	n/a	23,205	25,775	16,281	0
%	n/a	3.13	3.89	2.09	0
NHS South West					
£	n/a	39,042	43,024	45,448	27,563
%	n/a	3.37	3.83	4.99	4.67
NHS Yorkshire and Humber					
£	n/a	19,621	41,170	7,544	7,622
%	n/a	2.26	4.63	0.83	0.84
NHS West Midlands					
£	n/a	39,721	48,303	29,877	12,868
%	n/a	3.97	4.85	2.52	1.25
Total value (£)	n/a	7,527,776	9,247,232	9,647,899	9,571,074
Total value (%)	n/a	3.26	3.46	3.01	1.88

NHS: Private Sector

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the proportion of expansion in NHS activities that will be contracted to the private sector by 2015. [29481]

Mr Simon Burns: We have not made any estimate on the proportion of expansion in national health service activities that will be contracted to the private sector by 2015.

Nutrition

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many open meetings he has held to discuss nutrition policy since his Department assumed responsibility for the nutrition functions of the Food Standards Agency. [29794]

Anne Milton: Since the Department assumed responsibility for the nutrition functions of the Food Standards Agency, nutrition policy has been discussed with stakeholders in relation to the Government's Responsibility Deal. Discussions have taken place within the Responsibility Deal's Food network and three meetings have been held to date.

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the extent of any *(a)* duplication of functions, *(b)* policy overlap and *(c)* additional regulation in respect of nutrition policy since his Department assumed responsibility for the nutrition functions of the Food Standards Agency. [29795]

Anne Milton: The transfer of nutrition policy in the Department has delivered the key benefit of bringing together public health issues for England into one Department, as an early step towards the implementation of a new public health system in England. No assessment has been made regarding duplication of functions, policy overlap and additional regulation in respect of nutrition policy since the Department assumed responsibility for the nutrition functions of the Food Standards Agency.

Organs: Donors

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consideration he has given to the merits of an opt-out organ donation system; and if he will make a statement. [30136]

Anne Milton: The Independent Organ Donation Taskforce recommended against presumed consent in 2008, concluding that although such a system might have the potential to deliver benefits it would also present significant difficulties, which might not bring about the desired increase in donation rates. Instead, the Taskforce recommended that efforts should concentrate on implementing the recommendations in their first report which they believe should lead to an increase of at least 50% in donation rates by 2013. Currently donation rates are around 20% higher than the baseline year of 2007-08 and around 1 million more people have signed up to the organ donation register.

The Welsh Assembly Government have proposed in their legislative programme, a Legislative Competence Order (LCO) to introduce an opt out system of organ donation in Wales. Officials from the Wales Office and the Welsh Assembly Government are working closely with the Department as these proposals are considered. Government ministers will comment as the process develops.

Pain: Health Services

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effects on patients of the reductions in NHS pain management sessions. [29935]

Paul Burstow: National health service commissioners are responsible for achieving the best possible outcomes for their patients within the resources available. We recognise that specialist pain management clinics can be a very successful model for helping people with chronic pain, but it is for local commissioners working together with clinicians and patients to determine the precise arrangements best suited to meet local needs.

We have made no such assessment.

Skin Cancer

Pauline Latham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to reduce the incidence of and mortality rates from malignant melanoma. [29544]

Paul Burstow: Malignant melanoma is caused by long-term exposure to the ultraviolet (UV) light in sunlight. To reduce incidence and mortality rates of the disease, we are supporting SunSmart, the national skin cancer prevention campaign run by Cancer Research UK (CRUK) on behalf of the UK health departments. SunSmart raises awareness among the public and health care professions about the causes of skin cancer, how to prevent it, and the importance of early detection, presentation and treatment. In 2010-11, the Department is funding a further year of the CRUK SunSmart campaign for England on skin cancer prevention.

We are also introducing legislation to protect young people from the UV light that sunbeds provide. The Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010 comes into force on 8 April 2011, and will serve to prevent people under the age of 18 from using sunbeds on commercial premises, by making it an offence for sunbed operators to allow people under the age of 18 to access sunbeds on their premises.

Skin Diseases

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans his Department has to draw up a National Quality Standard on inflammatory skin diseases; [30334]

(2) what plans his Department has to draw up a National Quality Standard on *(a)* psoriasis and *(b)* eczema. [30335]

Mr Simon Burns: The case for developing a Quality Standard on inflammatory skin diseases, including psoriasis and eczema, will be considered as part of work to commission a comprehensive library of such Standards from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, in line with plans set out in the White Paper "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS".

Skipton Fund

Sir Robert Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many widows of haemophiliacs have received the first stage payment from the Skipton Fund to date. [28102]

Anne Milton: The Skipton Fund reports that approximately 30 first stage payments have been made to the estates of applicants with haemophilia who would have been eligible for this payment had they not died (after 29 August 2003). Figures are not available on whether the main beneficiary of the estate was the widow.

Sir Robert Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many widows of haemophiliacs are in receipt of regular payments from the public purse as a result of their husbands' death attributable to contaminated blood products provided by the NHS. [28103]

Anne Milton: The Macfarlane Trust reports that it makes regular payments to between 50 and 60 widows of haemophiliacs whose husbands' death was attributable to contaminated blood products provided by the national health service.

Slaughterhouses

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many slaughterhouses were closed in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; and for what reason in each case. [29803]

Anne Milton: In 2000 there were 509 approved slaughterhouses in Great Britain submitting throughput information to the Meat Hygiene Service (MHS). In the following 10 years, the number of approved slaughterhouses submitting throughput information fell in accordance with the following table.

Year[1]	*Number in operation*	*Reduction from previous year*
2001	493	16
2002	469	24
2003	464	5
2004	450	14
2005	429	21
2006	409	20
2007	391	18
2008	377	20
2009	369	8
2010[2]	357	12

[1] From January to December in each year.
[2] Figure as at 7 December 2010.

On 1 April 2010 the MHS merged with the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

While reasons for closure of an approved slaughterhouse may be known at a local level this information is not available from the FSA central database.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many slaughterhouses are registered in each county; and how many were so registered in *(a)* 1980, *(b)* 1983, *(c)* 1987, *(d)* 1992, *(e)* 1997, *(f)* 2001, *(g)* 2005 and *(h)* 2008. [29838]

Anne Milton: The Meat Hygiene Service was established on 1 April 1995 therefore data are only available from that year.

The following tables set out the number of approved slaughterhouses in Great Britain (GB), broken down by country and county, for the years 1997, 2001, 2005, 2008 and 2010.

England

County	*1997*	*2001*	*2005*	*2008*	*2010*[1]
Avon	4	4	2	3	3
Bedfordshire	4	3	3	3	3
Berkshire	2	3	2	1	1
Buckinghamshire	2	2	1	1	0
Cambridgeshire	4	3	3	3	2
Cheshire	17	16	13	12	12
Cleveland	8	6	4	3	3
Cornwall	13	13	13	10	10
County Durham	6	3	3	3	4
Cumbria	11	10	9	10	9
Derbyshire	23	19	13	11	10
Devon	19	18	18	16	15
Dorset	7	5	5	4	4
East Sussex	5	3	2	1	1
East Yorkshire	4	2	2	2	2
Essex	15	16	12	11	10
Gloucestershire	5	5	6	5	5
Greater London	4	2	2	2	2
Greater Manchester	15	11	10	8	7
Hampshire	6	4	1	2	2
Herefordshire	8	4	4	3	2
Hertfordshire	3	3	3	3	3
Humberside	7	4	4	4	4

England

County	*1997*	*2001*	*2005*	*2008*	*2010*
Kent	7	8	7	7	6
Lancashire	24	20	15	14	13
Leicestershire	16	13	13	9	8
Lincolnshire	24	19	18	13	14
Merseyside	4	3	3	3	3
Norfolk	24	21	18	14	13
North Lincolnshire	1	1	1	1	1
North Somerset	4	3	3	3	3
North Yorkshire	27	18	17	13	12
Northamptonshire	8	5	3	2	2
Northumberland	1	1	0	0	0
Nottinghamshire	7	7	5	2	2
Oxfordshire	5	1	1	1	1
Shropshire	8	6	6	5	6
Somerset	15	14	12	10	9
South Yorkshire	8	7	6	7	7
Staffordshire	28	22	20	18	18
Suffolk	16	16	12	13	11
Surrey	2	2	2	2	2
Tyne and Wear	5	4	5	3	2
Warwickshire	5	5	4	3	3
West Midlands	22	21	16	17	16
West Sussex	3	1	2	1	1
West Yorkshire	27	18	17	15	16
Wiltshire	6	4	4	4	3
Worcestershire	2	2	2	2	1
England total	491	401	347	303	287

Scotland

County	*1997*	*2001*	*2005*	*2008*	*2010*
Aberdeenshire	4	4	4	3	3
Angus	2	2	2	2	2
Annandale and Eskdale	1	1	1	1	1
Argyll and Bute	3	2	1	2	2
Ayrshire	4	5	5	5	4
Banff and Buchan	2	2	2	1	1
Berwickshire	1	1	0	1	0
Caithness	1	1	1	1	1
Clackmannanshire	1	1	0	0	0
Dumfries and Galloway	2	1	1	1	1
Ettrick and Lauderdale	1	1	1	1	1
Fife	1	1	1	1	2
Inverness-shire	0	0	1	1	1
Isle of Arran	1	1	1	1	1
Isle of Mull	0	1	1	1	1
Isle-of-Lewis	1	1	1	1	1
Lanarkshire	6	5	4	5	5
Lothian	1	1	0	0	0
Midlothian	1	1	0	0	0
Morayshire	2	2	2	1	1
Orkney	2	2	2	1	1
Outer Hebrides	0	0	1	1	1
Perth and Kinross	1	1	1	1	1
Perthshire	2	2	2	2	2
Renfrewshire	1	1	1	1	1
Ross-shire	2	2	2	2	2
Roxburghshire	0	0	0	1	0
Scottish Borders	0	0	0	1	0
Shetland	2	3	3	2	2
Stewartry	1	1	0	0	0
Stirling	1	1	1	1	1

Scotland

County	*1997*	*2001*	*2005*	*2008*	*2010*[1]
Strathclyde	1	1	1	0	0
Tayside	1	1	0	0	0
West Lothian	3	3	3	1	1
Western Isles	2	1	1	1	1
Scotland total	54	53	47	44	41

Wales

County	*1997*	*2001*	*2005*	*2008*	*2010*[1]
Anglesey	1	1	1	1	1
Carmarthenshire	1	2	3	2	2
Ceredigion	0	0	0	0	0
Clwyd	7	6	6	6	6
Denbighshire	2	2	1	1	1
Dyfed	6	7	5	3	2
Gwent	3	2	2	1	0
Gwynedd	8	7	6	5	5
Mid Glamorgan	2	4	4	3	3
Monmouthshire	2	3	2	2	2
Pembrokeshire	0	0	1	1	1
Powys	4	4	3	3	4
Shropshire	1	0	0	0	0
Swansea	0	0	0	1	1
West Glamorgan	2	1	1	1	1
Wales total	39	39	35	30	29

Year[2]	*GB totals*
1997	584
2001	493
2005	429
2008	377
2010[1]	357

[1] Figures as at 9 December 2010.
[2] From January to December in each year.

Spinal Injuries

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the capability of the NHS to treat people with spinal cord injuries. [29668]

Paul Burstow: In 2005, the Department published the National Service Framework for Long-Term Conditions, a 10-year plan to raise the standard of treatment, care and support for people with long-term neurological conditions, including those living with spinal cord injury, across local health and social care services. It is the responsibility of local health bodies to ensure they commission local, and specialised, spinal injury services to meet the need of those living with spinal injuries.

We have made no assessment of the capability of the national health service to treat people with spinal cord injuries.

Spinal Injuries: Bassetlaw

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what NHS medical facilities there are for the treatment of spinal cord injuries for residents of Bassetlaw. [29667]

Paul Burstow: This information is not held centrally. This information may be available directly from Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust.

Strokes: East Midlands

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions he has received representations from non-executive directors of *(a)* Bassetlaw primary care trust, *(b)* Doncaster primary care trust and *(c)* Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust on stroke treatment in the last 12 months. [29745]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department has received no representations on stroke treatment from non-executive directors of these national health service organisations in the last 12 months.

Surgery

Mary Macleod: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost to the NHS of *(a)* an elective and *(b)* a non-elective surgical episode (i) in England and (ii) in each primary care trust was in the latest year for which figures are available. [29926]

Mr Simon Burns: Average unit cost data for a wide range of procedures are submitted to the Department by providers of national health service services (acute trusts and primary care trust (PCT) provider arms) through the annual reference cost collection. 2008-09 is the most recent year for which reference cost data have been published.

It is not possible to separately identify average unit cost data for "surgical episodes".

2008-09 average unit cost data for elective and non-elective in-patient procedures reported by acute trusts and PCT provider arms are shown in the following table.

£

	Unit cost (elective in-patient)	Unit cost (non-elective in-patient)
All acute trusts and PCT provider arms	2,809	1,458

Source:
Figures calculated from schedule 4 (NHS trusts and PCTs combined) of the national schedules of reference costs for the financial year 2008-09 published at www.dh.gov.uk/nhscosting

2008-09 average unit cost data for elective and non-elective in-patient procedures reported by individual PCT provider arms are shown in the following table.

£

Organisation name	*Unit cost (elective in-patient)*	*Unit cost (non-elective in-patient)*
Berkshire West PCT	2,102	4,297
Buckinghamshire PCT	7,207	6,901
Cambridgeshire PCT	1,318	908
Camden PCT	3,974	
County Durham PCT	1,924	2,172
Cumbria Teaching PCT	2,924	4,370
Darlington PCT	3,367	2,956
Derbyshire County PCT	3,904	5,293
Devon PCT		989
Dorset PCT	1,332	5,353
East Riding of Yorkshire PCT		5,289
Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT	12,354	4,732
Gloucestershire PCT	3,007	1,702
Great Yarmouth and Waveney PCT	4,877	
Hampsnire PCT	4,362	4,500
Isle of Wight NHS PCT	3,120	1,685
North Somerset PCT	4,178	3,267
North Staffordshire PCT	6,737	
Nottinghamshire County Teaching PCT	6,476	6,476
Redcar and Cleveland PCT		4,798
Shropshire County PCT	779	231
Somerset PCT		3,082
South Staffordshire PCT	7,003	3,073
Stoke on Trent PCT	4,409	3,761
Torbay Care Trust	5,901	235
Tower Hamlets PCT	2,560	
Wiltshire PCT		1,764
Worcestershire PCT	735	11,395

Note:
The above table lists just those PCT provider arms for which activity and cost data were reported.
Source:
Figures calculated from schedule 4 (NHS Trusts and PCTs combined) of the national schedules of reference costs for the financial year 2008-09 published at www.dh.gov.uk/nhscosting

Mary Macleod: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much funding *(a)* the Medical Research Council and *(b)* the National Institute for Health Research has provided for surgical research in each year since 2000; [29927]

(2) how many surgical trials have been funded by *(a)* the Medical Research Council and *(b)* the National Institute for Health Research in each year since 2000. [29928]

Mr Simon Burns: Available Medical Research Council (MRC) spend figures on surgical research are as follows:

	£ million
2004-05	3.6
2005-06	4.2
2006-07	6.7
2007-08	8.6
2008-09	10.9
2009-10	12.7

It should be noted that these figures comprise research on the development and evaluation of surgical treatments/therapeutic interventions as defined by the UK Clinical Research Collaboration only, and do not include more underpinning research that is relevant to surgery. Earlier comparable figures are not available.

The MRC is funding three surgical trials through the Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation programme. In addition, the MRC funds the Eagle trial effectiveness of lens extraction with intraocular lens implantation for the treatment of primary angle closure glaucoma. The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) was established in April 2006. The total value of awards made by NIHR for research relating to surgery, and the number of NIHR-funded surgical trials that commenced in each calendar year are shown in the table.

	Total awarded (£ million)	*Number of trials commenced*[1]
2007	11.8	9
2008	14.6	13
2009	9.8	7

[1] These figures include projects/programmes with a trial component

In addition, the NIHR clinical research network provides national health service research infrastructure support to a wide range of trials and other clinical studies in surgery.

Teenage Pregnancy: Brighton

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pregnancies among those aged under 19 years were recorded in Brighton and Hove in *(a)* 2007, *(b)* 2008 and *(c)* 2009. [30654]

Mr Hurd: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many pregnancies among those aged under 19 years were recorded in Brighton and Hove in (a) 2007, (b) 2008 and (c) 2009. [30654]

The Office for National Statistics produces statistics on conceptions which are estimates based on the number of live births, stillbirths or legal abortions. They do not include miscarriages and illegal abortions. The table below provides the number of conceptions to women aged under 19 in Brighton and Hove Unitary Authority in 2007 and 2008, the most recent years for which figures are available.

?

Table 1: Conceptions to women aged under 19[1] in Brighton and Hove Unitary Authority[2] in 2007 and 2008

	2007	*2008*
Brighton and Hove	328	270

[1] Under 19 years at estimated date of conception.

[2] Based on boundaries as of August 2010.

Further information about conception statistics is published on the Office for National Statistics website:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/product.asp?vlnk=15055

Tobacco: Retail Trade

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has for the implementation of regulations requiring *(a)* tobacco to be removed from display in shops and *(b)* the ending of sale of tobacco from vending machines. [29738]

Anne Milton: The Government are looking at options around the display of tobacco in shops, recognising the need to take action both to reduce tobacco consumption and to reduce burdens on businesses. No decisions have yet been made.

Legislation prohibiting the sale of tobacco from vending machines will come into effect on 1 October 2011. On 1 December, the court handed down judgment dismissing the judicial review claims by Sinclair Collis (wholly owned by Imperial Tobacco) against this legislation.

Written Questions: Government Responses

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to reply to question 26376, on funding of disabled children's services, tabled on 22 November 2010 for ordinary written answer. [29611]

Anne Milton: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave her on 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 894W.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 14 December 2010

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Catering

Dr Huppert: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what proportion of the *(a)* tea and *(b)* coffee provided through House of Commons catering outlets was from fair trade sources in the latest period for which figures are available; and what steps the Commission is taking to increase the proportion provided which is from such sources. [30189]

John Thurso: The information requested is as follows:

(a) All tea provided through the House of Commons catering outlets comes from sources classified as 'ethical'. Of the four brands sold, one is certified as 'Fairtrade' while the other three are certified under the Ethical Tea Partnership.

(b) All fresh coffee provided through the House of Commons catering outlets is certified as Fairtrade. A small quantity of instant coffee not certified as 'fair trade' is sold in areas where either space restrictions or volumes are insufficient to warrant equipment for fresh-brew coffee. This accounts for less 0.1% of all coffee purchases. Given that over 99.9% of coffee purchases are from accredited fair trade sources, the Catering and Retail Service is not actively seeking to increase the proportion.

Catering: Private Sector

Mr Knight: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what assessment the House of Commons Commission has made of allowing private operators to provide catering services in the precincts of the House. [30898]

John Thurso: The Commission has agreed, on the advice of the Finance and Services Committee, that the option of competitive tendering should be explored as part of the savings programme. That decision covers catering as well as other services. It will involve determining whether services should be outsourced or retained in house. The work of examining that option will begin early in 2011.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Electoral Register: Literacy

John Mann: To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what assessment the Electoral Commission has made of the effects of standards of literacy on implementation of individual voter registration. [30511]

Mr Streeter: The Electoral Commission informs me that in 2009 it commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct research on the collection of personal identifiers and the introduction of individual electoral registration. The research, which included people with a low level of literacy in the sample, found that participants experienced few difficulties in completing the forms. The findings of this research are available on the Commission's website.

The Commission further informs me that its plans for reviewing the move to individual electoral registration are being developed and will include an assessment of the challenges faced by different groups when registering to vote. It is intended that those who have a low level of literacy will form part of this work.

General Election 2010

Mr Gregory Campbell: To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what the reason is for the time taken for the Electoral Commission to publish details relating to each candidate who contested the general election on 6 May 2010. [30597]

Mr Streeter: The Electoral Commission informs me that although it has no statutory duty to publish details contained in candidate returns, in the interest of transparency the Commission published details of all the returns received from returning officers on 10 December 2010.

The Commission has published spending reports for 4,028 out of the 4,150 candidates who stood at the UK general election.

Candidates' agents are responsible for submitting their spending reports to the returning officer, and returning officers are responsible for making those reports available locally. Returning officers are also required to forward a copy of the reports to the Electoral Commission as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt.

While the Commission received the majority of returns from returning officers within a reasonable time after receipt, a considerable number required follow-up before a sufficiently comprehensive set of returns could be published. Publication of similar information after the UK general election in 2005 took place in March 2006.

INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENTARY STANDARDS AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Personnel

Bob Russell: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, pursuant to the answer of 9 December 2010, what the appropriate steps were which the Interim Chief Executive took to investigate allegations of improper behaviour by staff at the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority made in the House on 2 December; and what the position is of each member of staff investigated for evidence to support the allegations. [30883]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking what steps I took to investigate allegations of improper behaviour by staff at the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority made in the House on 2 December; and what the position is of each member of staff investigated for evidence to support the allegations.

Following the claims made in the House on 2 December, I met the individual named to discuss the matter. I have not seen any evidence to support the allegations made. Hence, I fully endorse the statement made by IPSA's Chairman on 2 December refuting the allegations.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30026]

Mr Swire: The Department did not have an annual budget for conferences at either 7 May 2010 or 7 December 2010.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

Departmental Official Visits

Priti Patel: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities how many events in the UK the Government Equalities Office has *(a)* organised and *(b)* sent officials to attend in each year since its inception; what the cost to the public purse was in each case; and how many Government Equalities Office staff participated in each such event. [22064]

Lynne Featherstone: The Government Equalities Office (GEO) does not hold information showing the number of conferences held or attended, nor do records cover the cost of holding or attending conferences. GEO has one conference code which covers the cost of hosting and attending events, which shows the following:

Financial year	*Conference expenditure (£)*
2007-08[1]	220,167
2008-09	305,275
2009-10	414,423
2010-11	87,166

[1] GEO was established in October 2007.

Most of this expenditure was for events held in preparations for new legislation, which culminated in the 2010 Equality Act. Another large element was for events which sought to improve the diversity of representation in public life.

Departmental Sponsorship

Priti Patel: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what expenditure the Government Equalities Office incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [27531]

Lynne Featherstone: Since its creation on 12 October 2007, the Government Equalities Office has sponsored the following events:

Event	*Calendar year*	*£*
The Power List	2009	2,350
Civil Service Live	2009	10,350
Everywoman Awards	2009	9,200
Civil Service Equality and Diversity Awards	2009	4,025
The Power List	2010	3,220
Asian Achievers Awards	2010	1,000

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities how much the Government Equalities Office spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28858]

Lynne Featherstone: In 2008-09 and 2009-10, the Government Equalities Office has spent the following amounts on grey fleet:

Financial Year	*Mileage*	*Expenditure (£)*
2008-09	1,231	432.25
2009-10	1,284	447.60

Equality: Regulation

Miss Begg: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what assessment she has made of the likely effect on the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 of the Government's one-in one-out policy on regulations. [28400]

Lynne Featherstone *[holding answer 2 December 2010]*: Most of the Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010. The remaining provisions of the Act that have not yet been commenced, like all prospective regulatory measures across Government, are being considered in the light of one-in-one-out policy and their impact on business and others affected.

EU Law

Priti Patel: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities how many EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by the Government Equalities Office; and what estimate she has made of the cost of each such transposition. [27494]

Lynne Featherstone: The Government Equalities Office has no EU directives pending transposition.

Grants

Anas Sarwar: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what grants have been awarded by the Government Equalities Office in 2010-11 to date; what grants she plans to award in each of the next two years; what the monetary value is of each such grant fund; and to which organisations such grants have been made. [27863]

Lynne Featherstone *[holding answer 1 December 2010]*: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply given on 19 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 989-90W.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Korean Peninsula

12. **Stephen Phillips:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the North Korean Government in respect of its recent military action against South Korea. [30272]

Mr Jeremy Browne: Tensions are likely to remain high until North Korea abandons its provocative behaviour, and violation of UN resolutions, and creates the conditions for the resumption of talks by making verifiable progress towards denuclearisation. Talks between relevant parties offer the best prospect for achieving a resolution of the dispute, but cannot succeed without trust.

Our ambassador in Pyongyang, and senior officials in London, have made representations to the North Korean Government condemning the military action and urging North Korea to refrain from such attacks in the future.

Iran

13. **Andrew Bridgen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of EU sanctions on Iran; and if he will make a statement. [30274]

Mr Hague: I have no doubt that the strong and unprecedented international sanctions on Iran, including the EU measures, have been instrumental in bringing Iran back to the negotiating table. It is vital that we now maintain this pressure in order to persuade the Iranian Government to address the very real concerns about their nuclear programme.

14. **Mr Stewart Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on the human rights situation in Iran; and if he will make a statement. [30275]

Mr Hague: The human rights situation in Iran is deplorable. We welcome increased support for the UN resolution on the issue of which we are co-sponsor. We call on Iran to adhere to its international obligations and we will work with partners to encourage the regime to end abuses.

20. **Stephen Mosley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts on sanctions on Iran; and if he will make a statement. [30281]

Mr Hague: My officials and I are in close touch with our EU colleagues as we implement together the EU sanctions on Iran and try to persuade the Iranian Government, through a combination of pressure and engagement, to address the very real concerns about their nuclear programme.

Afghanistan

15. **Mrs Grant:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent progress has been made towards a political settlement in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [30276]

Mr Hague: The inauguration of the High Peace Council in October marked an important milestone for the Afghan Peace and Reintegration programme. The High Peace Council is taking forward political settlement issues, including support for community reintegration cases and engagement with international actors. We support President Karzai's efforts to reconcile with all those willing to meet the conditions he has laid down: renounce al-Qaeda, give up armed struggle; and respect the Afghan constitutional framework. The UK is working in support of President Karzai's approach. All our activity is in support of an Afghan-led process.

19. **Graeme Morrice:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his most recent assessment is of the political and security situation in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [30280]

Mrs Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his most recent assessment is of the political and security situation in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [30258]

Mr Hague: Earlier today I laid a written report on recent progress in Afghanistan, as part of the Government's commitment to keep the House regularly updated on the situation in Afghanistan. The report covers the security and political situation including the results of the recent elections, outcomes of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) conference in Lisbon, governance and regional engagement.

Russian Federation: Fossil Fuels

16. **Mr Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent progress he has made on discussions with the Government of the Russian Federation on fossil fuel subsidy reform; and if he will make a statement. [30277]

Mr Bellingham: The UK has been instrumental in pushing for fossil fuel subsidy reform through the G20, which includes Russia. The G20 reaffirmed its commitment to phase out fossil fuel subsidies at the G20 summits in Toronto in June 2010 and in Seoul in November 2010.

Middle East

17. **Priti Patel:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the state of relations between the UK and the countries of the middle east. [30278]

Alistair Burt: Strong relationships with middle east countries are a priority for the Government. In particular we will continue to work with the United States and the Quartet as well as with our Arab partners to secure progress towards a two state solution to the

Arab-Israeli conflict. We are also working to elevate our links with the Gulf, and will engage strongly with the new Iraqi Government when formed. We are co-operating strongly with international partners to support the Government of Yemen in their efforts to tackle al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and to ensure urgent reform and development in Yemen.

Gaza Aid Flotilla

18. **Rosie Cooper:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the progress of Israel's investigations into the deaths aboard the Gaza aid flotilla. [30279]

Alistair Burt: The establishment of an independent Israeli Commission of inquiry into the Gaza flotilla tragedy was an important step forward. My officials are in regular contact with the Israeli authorities on this issue. As we have made clear it is important that the Commission is able to proceed swiftly, transparently and rigorously, with access to the full evidence available. We have also been in touch with the Commission regarding British witnesses giving testimony.

Yemen

21. **Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he next plans to visit Yemen. [30282]

Alistair Burt: My travel plans are not for public disclosure for security reasons. I can, however, confirm that as part of the preparations for the next Friends of Yemen meeting in Riyadh there will be an intense round of engagement in the Gulf.

Prior to this meeting, the Government's engagement with Yemen and its Gulf neighbours will be taken forward through a series of ministerial and senior visits to the region.

The right hon. Member will be aware of the significant security threat to British nationals in Yemen, borne out by attacks on embassy staff in April and October this year. Official visits are necessarily severely limited. My colleagues and I rely on the expert advice of security professionals on the possibility of future visits.

Departmental Air Travel

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many of his Department's staff based abroad used *(a)* economy class tickets and *(b)* low-cost airlines to travel to and from the UK in the latest period for which figures are available. [29485]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not hold information centrally on individual travel by its staff as responsibility for duty travel overseas is devolved to Posts. Obtaining this information from every Post would be at disproportionate cost.

The standard policy for duty air travel is that on journeys under five hours all staff should travel economy. Value for money and budgetary restraints mean all Posts look to travel by the most cost effective means available.

Low cost airlines are used for travel to and from the UK.

Departmental Security

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether each foreign national who has worked in his Department in the last five years obtained security clearance; [28574]

(2) what level of security clearance has been given to outside caterers working in his Department in the last three years. [28575]

Alistair Burt: All foreign nationals employed directly by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in the UK and in missions abroad in the last five years have been security cleared to the level required for their job. The levels of clearances were in accordance with the Government's National Security Vetting (NSV). Foreign nationals employed by others who have worked on FCO premises in the UK have either been security cleared or escorted by security cleared staff.

Staff employed by outside catering companies working in the offices of the Foreign arid Commonwealth Office (FCO) within the last three years have been either security cleared to "Security Clearance" (SC), the second highest level under the NSV, or escorted by staff cleared to SC.

Diplomatic Service: E-mail

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many people have access to electronic information sent to his Department's London offices by British embassies and High Commissions. [29518]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) takes the protection of its information, including electronic information, very seriously, and complies with the Cabinet Office Security Policy Framework, which covers all areas of security, including technical, physical, procedural and personnel security. Approximately 5,000 staff in the UK have accounts on the FCO's corporate IT system with access to electronic information sent directly to their accounts from our posts overseas, as well as restricted access to certain other system areas containing shared information of direct relevance to their part of FCO business. Most UK users also have access to the FCO's corporate records repository. Documents, including diplomatic reporting from posts, are registered in this system in line with FCO information management policy; there are differing levels of access to the system governed by the corporate records security model.

FCO information is shared with other Government Departments when appropriate and necessary. All Government Departments are required to conform with Cabinet Office standards to protect data at the relevant classification. We work closely with recipient Departments to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to protect any information we share with them.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the security of electronic information sent by diplomats. [29519]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) takes the protection of its information, including electronic information, very seriously, and complies with the Cabinet Office Security Policy Framework, which covers all areas of security, including technical, physical, procedural and personnel security. In line with Cabinet Office requirements, the FCO completed its annual Security Policy Framework compliance assessment, drawing on the outcome of the FCO's Information Assurance Maturity assessment of May 2010, the results of which were included in the FCO's Statement of Internal Control. In light of recent events, and in response to the request from the National Security Adviser that all Departments review existing processes and systems, the FCO is carrying out a further review of all security measures to ensure these continue to be both robust and proportionate, working with recipient Departments of FCO's data to confirm with them that appropriate measures are in place for any onward handling and distribution of FCO data.

International Co-operation: Climate Change

Graham Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's role is in international efforts to address climate change; and if he will make a statement. [30268]

Mr Bellingham: We see an effective response to climate change as underpinning our security and prosperity. While the Department of Energy and Climate Change leads on the negotiations on a global agreement, effective deployment of foreign policy assets is crucial to mobilising the political will needed if we are to shape an effective response.

Judaism: Festivals and Special Occasions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will seek to publish in the *Official Report* the text of his Chanukah message to the Jewish community; and if he will make a statement. [29842]

Alistair Burt: Messages of greeting to different religious faiths by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary are published on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website and on the websites of relevant embassies.

Lockerbie: Bombings

Damian Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice his Department received from the British Embassy in Libya in relation to political, commercial and operational consequences of a decision not to release Abdelbaset Ali Mohmed Al Megrahi; if he will provide a copy of that advice to the Cabinet Secretary for inclusion in his review of papers relating to the release of Al Megrahi; and if he will make a statement. [30257]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) receives regular reporting from our embassy in Tripoli on a wide range of issues. The FCO has provided all relevant documentation to the Cabinet Office for the Cabinet Secretary's review.

Pakistan: Capital Punishment

Angie Bray: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations his Department has made to the Government of Pakistan on the death sentence passed on Asia Bibi by a court in Punjab for the offence of insulting the Prophet Mohammed. [30533]

Alistair Burt: The UK opposes the death penalty in all circumstances as a matter of principle. In Pakistan, alongside EU colleagues, we regularly raise our support for its abolition and work with civil society to encourage reform.

Our high commission in Islamabad has raised the case of Mrs Asia Bibi with the Punjab Government and we will continue to do so at a senior level. Specific representations to the Government of Pakistan are being made by the head of the EU delegation, with UK support, in Islamabad. I raised the case of Asia Bibi with the Pakistan Minister for Minorities, Shahbaz Bhatti, on 9 December 2010.

Sri Lanka

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Defence on his recent meeting with the Sri Lankan President. [30455]

Alistair Burt: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on a wide range of foreign policy issues.

Sri Lanka: Human Rights

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the human rights situation in Sri Lanka; and if he will make a statement. [30108]

Alistair Burt: The human rights situation in Sri Lanka remains a concern following the end of the military conflict. Key concerns include the persistent culture of impunity for human rights violations and the limits on freedom of expression, in particular intimidation of the media and the political opposition. We continue to raise our concerns both bilaterally with the Government of Sri Lanka and at the UN Human Rights Council. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I discussed with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister on 19 and 20 October 2010 the importance of improving the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. Our high commission in Colombo co-ordinates closely with international partners in calling upon the Government to take action to protect human rights and investigate abuses whenever they occur.

TRANSPORT

Departmental Air Travel

Karl McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many senior civil servants in his Department have taken internal UK flights in an official capacity since 6 May 2010; and how many such flights have been taken by senior civil servants in that period. [29120]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* Since 6 May 2010 28 senior civil servants in the Department for Transport and its agencies have taken a total of 84 internal UK flights.

Information relating to the central Department contained in the figures above comprises flights booked through the main air travel contract. Information about flights booked in any other way is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since its creation. [28150]

Norman Baker: The cost of press cuttings services to the Department in each of the last eight years since its creation in 2002 is provided in the following table for the central Department and its seven Executive agencies.

£000

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
DFT(C)	170.0	164.3	155.7	243.1	252.8	267.3	191.3	187.7
DSA	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5.5	21.4	5.0
DVLA	1.2	2.5	1.4	1.5	1.9	2.2	3.3	3.7
GCDA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HA	n/a	n/a	n/a	31.3	58.9	73.4	49.8	62.3
MCA	2.5	0	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	0
VCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
VOSA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The 2009-10 cost of press cuttings services for the central Department includes £59,500 for regional (local) press cuttings outsourced by the Central Office of Information (COI). In previous years this service was provided in-house by the COI as part of its Government News Network regional service and itemised cost are not available. The years 2002-03 to 2008-09 do not therefore include the cost of regional press cuttings.

The Driving Standards Agency and Highways Agency are unable to provide figures specifically for press cuttings services in earlier years.

Departmental Public Expenditure

David Mowat: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much and what proportion of his Department's capital expenditure was allocated to *(a)* London and *(b)* the north-west in each of the last five financial years. [28830]

Norman Baker: Details of the Department for Transport's regional expenditure is published by HM Treasury in its Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses which is available on-line at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pespub_country_regional_analysis.htm

Those tables show the following amounts and proportion of the Department's capital expenditure that were allocated to London and the north-west in each of the last five financial years.

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
London (£ million)	637	841	811	778	719
Percentage	18.4	17.5	17.4	15.0	13.5
North-west (£ million)	360	544	573	622	658
Percentage	10.4	11.3	12.3	12.0	12.4

These figures exclude capital grant to local authorities, as this information is collated separately by the Department for Communities and Local Government, Department for Children, Schools and Families, Department for Work and Pensions and devolved Administrations.

Departmental Railways

Karl McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many senior civil servants in his Department have travelled by first class rail in an official capacity since 6 May 2010. [29121]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* In the Department's seven agencies 31 senior civil servants have travelled by first class rail since 6 May 2010.

The central Department does not record rail travel expenditure by senior civil servants separately. The information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Driving Tests: Qualifications

Graham Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with industry representative groups on the introduction of the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence; and what estimate he has made of the likely cost to the public purse of the introduction of that certificate. [30475]

Mike Penning: The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) implemented the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (Driver CPC) following three public consultations and with input from stakeholders, including representatives from:

GoSkills(GS)
Skills for Logistics (SfL)
Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)
Road Haulage Association (RHA)
Freight Transport Association (FTA)
Joint Approvals Unit for Periodic Training (JAUPT)
Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU)
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA)
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
Transport Commissioners.

DSA subsequently established a Driver CPC Advisory Group to consider issues arising from the introduction of Driver CPC, which had its first meeting in November 2010. The group's membership is similar to that listed above but it does not include the Traffic Commissioners, DVLA, or JAUPT. The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport is also a member of the group.

DSA operates as a trading fund. The services the agency provides are funded by driving and riding test fees and other non-statutory activities. The costs incurred by the agency for the implementation of Driver CPC are being recovered from the driver CPC initial qualification test fees, periodic training approval fees, and driver training hours upload fees.

Electric Vehicles: Local Government

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of electric vehicles used by local authorities in *(a)* England, *(b)* the West Midlands and *(c)* Coventry. [24859]

Norman Baker: The Government are committed to supporting the uptake of electric vehicles in the UK. The Secretary of State has recently announced provision of over £400 million to support measures promoting their use and which will be used for consumer incentives, open to all consumers including local authorities, infrastructure and research and development.

Coventry is part of a Midlands bid for funding under the second wave of the Government's Plugged-In Places scheme. The winning bids will be announced shortly.

Under the Government funded Low Carbon Vehicle Public Procurement Programme, over 285 vehicles (85 cars and 200 vans) will be bought for use in public fleets of these 41 vans and four cars are for use in the Coventry area.

The Clean Vehicles Directive (2009/33/EC) requires public authorities and utilities to take into account the environmental impacts, when procuring road vehicles. Guidance on this Directive will be issued to all local authorities.

Network Rail

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much Network Rail has paid to companies in the private sector since 2002. [29406]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 8 December 2010]*: This is a commercial matter for Network Rail as the owner and operator of the national rail network. The hon. Member should contact Network Rail's acting chief executive at the following address for a response to her question:

Peter Henderson
Acting Chief Executive
Network Rail
Kings Place
90 York Way
London
N1 9AG.

Railway Stations: Greater London

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to include Clapham High Street and Wandsworth Road stations in his planned platform lengthening programme. [27993]

Mrs Villiers: The stations at which platforms will be extended are detailed within Network Rail's updated delivery plan. The plans do not include extending platforms at Clapham High Street and Wandsworth Road stations. Services that stop at those stations today, and those which are planned to stop there in future do not exceed the length of the current platforms.

Railway Stations: Repairs and Maintenance

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 52-54WS, on rail investment, what rail infrastructure improvements will be made to *(a)* Reading station, *(b)* Birmingham station, *(c)* London King's Cross station, *(d)* Gatwick Airport station and *(e)* the East Coast main line. [28428]

Mrs Villiers: The Government have secured funding for a number of vital improvements across the network that will provide more capacity for growing passenger and freight services.

At Reading, £850 million will fund additional platforms, new flyovers and a new depot. The works will allow more passenger and freight trains to operate, reduce delays and will deliver customer benefits on the wider Great Western route.

The Birmingham Gateway Project will renovate and improve Birmingham New Street station, which handles 75% more trains and over twice the number of passengers it was designed for in the 1960s.

At London King's Cross, work on a new concourse containing a ticket hall and passenger waiting area is proceeding to complement the new main line platform and improved access to the Underground.

At Gatwick, improvements are being jointly funded by Network Rail and Gatwick airport to provide a new platform and better passenger circulation areas. The enhancements will remove a bottleneck on the Brighton Main Line.

On the East Coast Main Line, Network Rail are delivering a package of capacity and reliability enhancements across the route including an upgrade of the 'Joint Line' via Lincoln, new platforms at Finsbury Park, new flyovers at Hitchin and Shaftholme in Yorkshire and improvements at Peterborough.

Railways: Fares

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how he plans to allocate the revenue which will accrue to his Department from train fares in each of the next three years; and if he will make a statement. [28091]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: On 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 466-68, the Secretary of State for Transport announced plans for provision of additional rolling stock and electrification, building on the announcements made earlier in the comprehensive spending review. The revenue from fares will help the Government deliver much needed improvements on the rail network, including provision of extra carriages.

Railways: Greater London

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the likely economic effect of train ticket price increases on *(a)* London, *(b)* non-metropolitan areas and *(c)* metropolitan areas. [27664]

Mrs Villiers: Despite the economic downturn, passenger numbers are, in general, still increasing and we expect this trend to continue. The fares increase announced recently will help the Government deliver much needed improvements on the rail network including improving conditions and relieving overcrowding on busy routes.

Road Signs and Markings: Tourism

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had on renewing the guidelines for the siting of brown tourist information signage on routes managed by the Highways Agency. [25528]

Mike Penning: The chief executive of the Highways Agency discussed the current tourist signing policy for trunk roads with the Minister for Tourism and Heritage, my hon. Friend the Member for Weston-super-Mare (John Penrose) on 12 October 2010. The Minister indicated that he is considering these matters in the context of his development of a new national tourism strategy. I am also looking into the issue of brown tourist information signage.

Rolling Stock: Procurement

Angie Bray: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent progress has been made on rolling stock procurement; and if he will make a statement. [28342]

Mrs Villiers: On 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 466-68, the Secretary of State for Transport confirmed the procurement process for new Thameslink trains would go ahead. The identification of a preferred bidder and contract award is anticipated for next year.

In addition the Secretary of State announced that most of Britain's ageing Intercity 125 'high speed trains' are to be retired. Two alternative options remain under consideration: a revised and lower cost Intercity Express Programme bid from Agility Trains (Hitachi and John Laing), which envisages a mixture of electric trains and 'hybrid' trains with both electric and diesel engines; and a new proposal for a fleet of new all-electric trains which could be coupled to new diesel locomotives where the overhead electric power lines end.

We are also negotiating with train operators to provide further additional capacity through the procurement of additional carriages in London and other cities. Further details will be announced once these negotiations are concluded. It is expected that the new trains associated with these interventions will be procured by train operators.

Waterloo Station

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department plans to continue to hold a freehold interest in the Waterloo International terminal following any sale. [29190]

Mrs Villiers: The freehold of the former Waterloo International terminal is currently vested in BRB (Residuary) Ltd. As recently announced by the Cabinet Office on 14 October 2010, it is proposed that BRB (Residuary) Ltd will be abolished. Discussions have started as to how BRB (Residuary) Ltd's current assets, including Waterloo International terminal, will be managed in the future.

The Government are committed to ensuring that the former Eurostar platforms at Waterloo International terminal are brought back into use for domestic passenger services.

JUSTICE

Cemeteries

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) if he will assess the level of compliance of Birmingham city council with his Department's guidance on managing the safety of burial ground memorials since January 2010; [30409]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of graveyards in which memorials have been fitted with temporary wooden stakes in accordance with his Department's guidance on managing the safety of burial ground memorials in 2010 to date. [30512]

Mr Djanogly: Responsibility for the management of local authority cemeteries, including the procedures for the safety of staff and visitors, lies with the relevant council. Burial authorities have been encouraged to take account of the Department's guidance, but we have no plans to carry out individual compliance assessments.

We have not sought to estimate the extent to which wooden or other support stakes for memorials are still being used. Responses to the Ministry of Justice survey of burial ground operators in 2009 indicated that memorials considered to present a risk of causing serious injury were now more likely to be identified by suitable signs rather than to be fitted with stakes. It would be consistent with the Department's memorial safety guidance for the use of such stakes to be reduced.

Legal Costs

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the effects of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper on the prospects of success of personal injury claimants whose costs will be restricted. [30093]

Mr Djanogly: A set of impact assessments were published alongside our "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", which include a preliminary assessment of the impact of individual proposals. The preliminary impact assessments can be found at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/consultations.htm

and respondents are invited to comment on the preliminary impacts identified.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will take steps to provide funding for meritorious and difficult cases in the event that conditional fee agreement success fees and after the event insurance premiums are rendered non-recoverable. [30095]

Mr Djanogly: The consultation paper, "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", published on 15 November 2010, sets out proposals for abolishing recoverability of success fees and after the event insurance premiums. It also includes possible refinements to help the claimants deal with the consequences of non-recoverability. The aim of the proposals is provide access to justice at proportionate costs for claimants and defendants. We will take final decisions on the way forward in the light of the consultation responses.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) if he will estimate the likely annual reduction in income of membership organisations attributable to the implementation of proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper; [30096]

(2) if he will estimate the likely annual reduction in income to trades unions attributable to the implementation of proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper. [30097]

Mr Djanogly: The consultation paper, "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", published on 15 November 2010, includes a proposal to abolish the recoverability of the self-insurance element by membership organisations (as prescribed under section 30 of the Access to Justice 1999), if the recoverability of after the event insurance premiums is abolished as proposed. We intend to consider the potential impacts further over the consultation period and will take into account the views of those responding to our consultations on costs and benefits when reaching final decisions.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) if he will estimate the cost to *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* the NHS of care for those involved in accidents who will not pursue claims to pay for treatment as a result of implementation of proposals in the Legal Aid and the Civil Litigation Funding Green Papers; [30098]

(2) if he will assess the effect on clinical standards of the reduction in the number of claims of clinical negligence anticipated by the Legal Aid and the Civil Justice Funding Green Papers. [30099]

Mr Djanogly: I believe that our proposals will enable necessary claims to be brought and will allow access to justice at proportionate costs for claimants and defendants. Precise impacts are of course complicated to assess and subject to uncertainty. We intend to consider the potential impacts further over the consultation period and will take into account the views of those responding to our consultations on costs and benefits when reaching final decisions.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what estimate he has made of the average likely shortfall in costs to be met by a fast track claimant as the consequence of the proposals in the Civil Litigation Funding Green Paper as augmented by the proposed 10 per cent. uplift in damages for pain, suffering and loss of amenity in *(a)* cash terms and *(b)* as a proportion of the damages recovered. [30100]

Mr Djanogly: We have made no such estimate at this stage. Preliminary impact assessments were published alongside our "Proposals for Reform of Civil Litigation Funding and Costs in England and Wales—Implementation of Lord Justice Jackson's Recommendations", available at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/jackson-review-151110.htm

We will take into account the views of those responding to the consultation on costs and benefits when reaching final decisions.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether his Department placed restrictions on whom organisations invited to consultation meetings on the Legal Aid and the Civil Litigation Funding Green Papers might send to such meetings; whether any invited organisations have not been allowed to send delegates they have nominated; and if he will make a statement. [30165]

Mr Djanogly: I held two separate meetings with representative bodies following publication of the legal aid and the civil litigation funding and costs consultation papers. 25 bodies were invited to the former, on the legal aid proposals, and 17 to the latter on civil litigation funding and costs. Due to limitations on the available space, and to facilitate a structured discussion, each organisation was invited to send only one representative. The choice of representative was left to each individual organisation. The consultation continues until 14 February 2011 and Ministry of Justice officials will consider any future meeting requests from individual organisations during this period. In line with the Code of Practice on Consultation, a summary of the comments received for each consultation will be published alongside the Government's official response, which is expected in spring 2011.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will assess the consequences for small businesses of increases to the cost of litigation for commercial disputes. [30218]

Mr Djanogly: The Government are proposing to reduce the cost of litigation rather than just not increase it. This should have positive consequences for small businesses.

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what evidence of *(a)* a compensation culture and *(b)* perceptions of a compensation culture he evaluated in drawing up his proposals for reform of (i) legal aid and (ii) civil litigation funding. [30242]

Mr Djanogly: Neither the Government's proposals for reform of legal aid nor those for civil litigation funding and costs were informed by specific evidence of compensation culture or perceptions of a compensation culture. However, the Government take the view that legal aid has been available for a very wide range of issues which has led to the availability of taxpayer funding for unnecessary litigation. Our proposals for reform will ensure that the taxpayer pays for legal advice and litigation only in relation to serious issues which have sufficient priority to justify the use of public funds.

Our proposals for reform of civil litigation funding and costs are based on Lord Justice Jackson's year-long review of "Civil Litigation Costs". Lord Young of Graffham in his report into the compensation culture and health and safety, "Common Sense, Common Safety", published in October 2010, argues that incentives for claiming compensation must change and strongly endorses the Jackson proposals.

Magistrates Courts: Sentencing

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 17 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 861W, on magistrates courts: sentencing, if he will place in the Library information on the category of crime into which each case fell. [30483]

Mr Blunt: Pursuant to the answer of 17 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 861W, two tables (for the years 2008 and 2009) of the number of defendants proceeded against, found guilty, sentenced, sentence breakdown, for offence groups, by local justice area, for England and Wales, have been placed in the House Library.

Prisoners' Transfers: Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many offenders were transferred from prisons in England and Wales to prisons in Northern Ireland in each of the last six years. [30175]

Mr Blunt: The intra-jurisdictional transfer of prisoners between the United Kingdom is governed by the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997.

The number of prisoners transferred from England and Wales to Northern Ireland from 2004 to 2009 is as follows:

	Number
2004	5
2005	17
2006	10
2007	14
2008	5
2009	16

Prisoners: Foreign Nationals

Mr Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many foreign nationals were serving prison sentences of *(a)* four years or less and *(b)* more than four years on the most recent date for which figures are available. [30079]

Mr Blunt: As at 30 September 2010 there were 3,365 foreign national prisoners serving sentences of less than four years and 4,320 serving sentences of four years or more (including indeterminate sentences).

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large scale recording systems, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Prisons: Mobile Phones

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many unauthorised *(a)* mobile telephones and *(b)* SIM cards have been found in prisons in England and Wales in each of the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [30355]

Mr Blunt: NOMS is determined to address the risks that mobile phones present to security and to the safety of the public. We have implemented a strategy to minimise the number of mobile phones entering prisons, to find phones that do get in and to disrupt mobile phones that cannot be found.

The requested information is set out in the tables but, as the recording methodology changed in April 2010, the figures are not directly comparable.

Analysis of mobile phones and SIM cards is carried out at a central unit. Prior to April 2010, the number of phones and SIM cards that were analysed, or "interrogated", was recorded rather than the total number of "finds". The following table shows the number of interrogations that took place from December 2009 to March 2010. These figures do not reflect any phones or SIM cards not sent to our central unit for analysis, or which were sent but not analysed. A phone containing a SIM card (which would constitute one "find") would usually have been counted as two separate interrogations.

Month, year	*Total number of "interrogations"*
December 2009	675
January 2010	853
February 2010	938
March 2010	869

Since April 2010, prisons in England and Wales have been instructed to send mobile phones and SIM cards for analysis, or to advise if a phone or SIM card has been found but has not been sent for analysis. The following table outlines the total number of "finds" in all prisons for each month from April 2010 to November 2010. One "find" could constitute a mobile phone without a SIM card inside, a SIM card only, or a mobile phone with a SIM card inside.

	Total number of "finds"
2010	
April	463
May	528
June	859
July	658
August	576
September	659
October	568
November	633

The figures contained in the tables have been drawn from administrative data systems. Although care is taken when processing data, the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system. These data are not subject to audit.

Prisons: Mother and Baby Units

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many mothers and babies were held in prison in each of the last five years. [30080]

Mr Blunt: Between 1 May 2010 and 31 October 2010 the average population of mother and babies in prisons in England was 54 and 51 respectively. The population of mother and baby units includes expectant mothers.

Information prior to this date could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Probation: Working Hours

Claire Perry: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many working days were lost *(a)* on average per staff member and *(b)* in total in each probation area in the latest period for which figures are available. [30416]

Mr Blunt: The figures requested are set out in the following table for the period April 2009 to March 2010.

Probation staff sickness absence: 2009-10

Probation board/trust	*(a) Average days lost due to sickness absence per person (FTE)*	*(b) Total days lost due to sickness absence*
Avon and Somerset	6.6	3,518.0
Bedfordshire	10.6	1,941.5
Cambridgeshire	8.4	2,152.3
Cheshire	9.4	3,313.6
Cumbria	8.0	1,445.3
Derbyshire	8.7	3,07[illegible]
Devon and Cornwall	10.9	4,943.4
Dorset	9.1	2,352.7
Durham	9.1	2,445.8
Dyfed Powys	7.8	1,351.0
Essex	8.2	3,605.0
Gloucestershire	8.6	1,489.5
Greater Manchester	10.0	12,001.6
Gwent	13.0	3,174.7
Hampshire	8.7	5,080.0
Hertfordshire	9.1	2,263.0
Humberside	7.5	3,212.4
Kent	11.1	5,000.7
Lancashire	9.4	5,482.1
Leicestershire	7.9	4,029.0
Lincolnshire	7.9	1,801.6
London	12.0	32,660.5
Merseyside	10.2	7,285.7
Norfolk	9.8	2,746.5
North Wales	11.5	2,911.5
North Yorkshire	6.5	1,326.0
Northamptonshire	9.7	2,650.2
Northumbria	12.1	7,608.5
Nottinghamshire	8.3	4,732.7
South Wales	11.3	6,277.7
South Yorkshire	9.5	5,582.3
Staffordshire	11.5	5,082.1
Suffolk	7.9	1,776.7
Surrey	10.1	2,577.9
Sussex	9.5	3,851.1
Teesside	10.8	3,360.6
Thames Valley	10.0	6,568.6
Warwickshire	10.1	1,578.0
West Mercia	8.5	3,138.1
West Midlands	10.0	14,000.6
West Yorkshire	7.2	7,004.1
Wiltshire	9.1	1,600.0
National total	9.8	197,997.3

Data Sources and Quality

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Self-locking Snares

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many convictions there were for offences related to the use of self-locking snares in Sussex in each year since 2005. [30405]

Mr Blunt: The use of self-locking snares is an offence under section 11 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 but cannot be separately identified from other offences under section 11 by court proceedings data held by the Ministry of Justice.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan: Agriculture

Roberta Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the potential contribution of agricultural development in conflict resolution in Afghanistan. [30123]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: There are a wide range of factors which impact on the insurgency and conflict resolution in Afghanistan. Of these, reduced legal economic opportunities could be a factor driving some young males into joining the insurgency and armed opposition groups, as well as dissatisfactions associated with poor governance and corruption.

The agricultural sector plays a large part in the economy of Afghanistan. Furthermore, the 'Strategic Conflict Assessment of Afghanistan', published by the Recovery and Development Consortium in November 2008, suggests that men in rural communities are most at risk of recruitment into armed opposition groups. Providing increased and legitimate employment opportunities in the sector may, in addition to improving rural livelihoods, reduce the likelihood of disaffected, unemployed male youths joining the armed opposition. Conflict-sensitive community programmes which operate at the sub-district level may also help reduce tensions as well as resolve disputes over land ownership and natural resources.

Roberta Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding the Government have provided for *(a)* agricultural development and *(b)* emergency food aid in Afghanistan in each of the last five years. [30125]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) spent a total of £31.8 million on the agriculture sector in Afghanistan between 2005-06 and 2009-10. Of this, £30.5 million was spent on agricultural development and emergency food aid. The breakdown of this funding over each of the past five financial years is as follows.

£ million

	2005-06	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*Total*
Emergency Food Aid	0	0	0	14	1.2	15.2
Agricultural Development	2.1	1.2	0	6.5	5.5	15.3

Roberta Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans his Department has to assist agricultural development in Afghanistan. [30190]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: Agriculture is the backbone of the Afghan economy, contributing more than one-third of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Department for International Development (DFID) will continue to support a range of agricultural development programmes in Afghanistan over the coming years, to improve access to markets, add value to farmers' produce and provide support for agricultural livelihoods. For example, the new Helmand Growth Programme will provide support to farmers by providing skills training and access to credit and markets, while the Comprehensive Agriculture and Rural Development Facility provides incentives to sustain the reduction in poppy cultivation, by promoting licit agricultural livelihoods and strengthening agricultural markets. A decision on future programmes supporting agricultural development in Afghanistan will be made following the current Bilateral Aid Review, which will conclude early next year.

Afghanistan: Farmers

Roberta Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding the Government have provided for climate change adaptation by smallholder farmers in Afghanistan; and what proportion this represented of total Government funding in respect of *(a)* climate change and *(b)* climate change adaptation (i) overseas and (ii) in the developing world in each of the last five years. [30124]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: Our central recording systems do not capture this level of detail for project expenditure. Compiling the requested information would incur disproportionate cost.

The Department for International Development (DFID) recognises that smallholder farmers are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and we take this into account in the design and implementation of a number of our development activities, including through our research programme and our adaptation programmes. In 2009 the Stockholm Environment Institute produced a study on the socio-economic impacts of climate change in Afghanistan. This has informed our approach to ensuring that UK aid programmes are screened for their impact on climate change.

The UK Government have committed to provide £1.5 billion in Fast Start finance over the period 2010-12, to help the developing world carry out the urgent work needed to adapt to climate change, adopt clean technology and reduce emissions from deforestation. In 2010-11 the UK is providing approximately 41% of its Fast Start allocation for adaptation, a significant share of which has been designed to benefit smallholder farmers. The Department is in the course of monitoring and evaluating the impact of these ongoing programmes.

Afghanistan: Food

Roberta Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the level of threat to food security in Afghanistan. [30121]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The food security situation in Afghanistan is not considered critical. Based on information from the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), supported by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), national wheat prices have risen but remain affordable, and the availability of wheat is better than average due to last year's bumper harvest and better than average production this year. There is an overall grain shortage of around 750,000 metric tonnes, however there is good access to imports from Kazakhstan. The Government of Afghanistan and the international community, including the FAO and the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), are closely following the situation and have the capacity to provide support to food insecure areas and groups if required.

Burundi: Agriculture

Eric Joyce: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much his Department spent on agricultural development in Burundi in each of the last five years; [29932]

(2) what plans his Department has to provide agricultural development assistance to Burundi. [29983]

Mr O'Brien: Support from the Department for International Development (DFID) in the agricultural sector in Burundi in the last five years has been focused on food security interventions, with a total of £1.88 million contributed through the World Food Programme (WFP) and a UNDP-managed emergency support fund.

Details of funding in each financial year are as follows.

Financial Year	*£ million*
2005-06	1.23
2006-07	0.65

DFID has no plans to provide direct support to the agricultural sector in Burundi in the future. However, DFID supports the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF), which has so far provided a total of £540,000 to two businesses in Burundi for agricultural initiatives. Businesses are selected through a competitive process according to the criteria applied by the relevant funding window.

Eric Joyce: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much the Government has spent on climate change adaptation for smallholder farmers in Burundi in each of the last five years; and what proportion of total Government expenditure on *(a)* climate change programmes overseas, *(b)* climate change adaptation overseas, *(c)* climate change programmes in developing countries and *(d)* climate change adaptation in developing countries this represents; [29979]

(2) what steps his Department is taking to assist the poorest and most marginal farmers in Burundi to adapt to climate change *(a)* currently, *(b)* in the next five to 10 years and *(c)* over the next 50 years. [29980]

Mr O'Brien: The UK has not supported smallholder farmers in Burundi to adapt to climate change in the last five years.

Although the Department for International Development (DFID) does not plan to provide direct support to the agricultural sector in Burundi, we support two initiatives which could benefit farmers in the country. DFID has funded a study by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) into the economic effects of climate change in Burundi. DFID has also provided $15 million to the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF), for a new funding window on renewable energy and adaptation to climate technologies. This will provide matching funding to those businesses from the East African Community, including Burundi, that are successful in a competitive application process, and aims to support initiatives that will have a direct impact on the rural poor.

Burundi: Agriculture

Eric Joyce: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans his Department has to provide assistance to Burundi for the purposes of meeting its Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme commitments. [29982]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) strongly supports implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union, to establish long term investment plans and increase the proportion of national budgets for agriculture. DFID is supporting the CAADP process through a £10 million grant to a Multi-Donor Trust fund with the World Bank, which facilitates implementation of CAADP. We do not provide separate bilateral funding to Burundi to support CAADP implementation.

Burundi: Food

Eric Joyce: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what recent assessment he has made of food security in Burundi; [29930]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the likely effects of climate change on *(a)* agriculture and *(b)* food security in Burundi. [29931]

Mr O'Brien: The 2010 global hunger index ranks Burundi as one of four countries in the world with an 'extremely alarming' level of hunger. More than 50% of people in Burundi are undernourished. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimates that Burundi has a chronic deficit of 300,000 tonnes of cereals. The World Food Programme (WFP) estimates that Burundi's average per capita production is 1,400 kilocalories per day, compared to a recommended daily intake of 2,100. Even during harvest season, households spend up to 60% of their income on food.

The Department for International Development (DFID) funded a recent study by the Stockholm Environment Institute into the economic effects of climate change in Burundi. This projects risks of higher temperatures and reduced rainfall, as well as a greater incidence of events producing high intensity rainfall in a short period. Prolonged dryness can create groundwater scarcity and reduced pastureland, which in turn would lead to the loss of harvests and of livestock production. In order to adapt successfully, Burundi would need to diversify it commercial crops and introduce more effective agricultural production systems, including agroforestry and terracing. Without adaptation, Burundi would be at risk of chronic famines.

Eric Joyce: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on emergency food aid to Burundi in each of the last five years. [29933]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has provided £3.17 million of emergency food aid to Burundi in the last five years, through the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Details of funding in each financial year are as follows.

Financial year	*£ million*
2005-06	1.77
2006-07	0.7
2007-08	0.7

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30028]

Mr O'Brien: Detailed information on the Department for International Development's (DFID) budget planned for conferences is not centrally held and therefore not available without incurring disproportionate cost.

However, in accordance with the cross-Government freeze on marketing and advertising spending, all conferences paid for by DFID are being reviewed and agreed on a case-by-case basis.

Developing Countries: Civil Society

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to encourage the strengthening of civil society and local media in developing countries in order to help citizens hold their Governments to account. [30209]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) supports the strengthening of civil society and local media in developing countries through many centrally managed funds and in-country programmes. For example, DFID launched in October the new Global Poverty Action Fund which supports civil society organisations focused on service delivery in support of poverty reduction and the most off-track Millennium Development Goals in poor countries.

Support for this work is also provided through the Civil Society Challenge Fund and the Governance and Transparency Fund with more than 167 projects in more than 90 developing countries building the capacity of more than 800 local civil society and media organisations to enable them to better support citizens to hold their own Governments to account.

Developing Countries: Micro-level Insurance Services

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to support the provision of affordable micro-level insurance services in developing countries. [30208]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) supports the FinMark Trust for Southern Africa, which has developed a far reaching programme on micro-insurance. Further to its research on the opportunities and constraints for delivering insurance to low-income households in South Africa, the trust has supported diagnostic studies, regulatory reforms and business innovations in several countries, including Ethiopia and Zambia. This is partly through sponsorship of the global Access to Insurance Initiative. In Kenya, the DFID supported Financial Sector Deepening Trust (FSDT) has supported micro-insurance in two ways: by advising on the design of Safaricom and Equity Bank's M-Kesho product; and to develop and demonstrate the market viability of index-based insurance products to reduce the impact of weather risk on smallholder farmers and pastrolists.

In India, DFID's Poorest States Inclusive Growth Programme (currently under design) is expected to facilitate the development of a range of affordable financial products, including insurance. By the end of 2015, our aim is for an additional 3 million women in the four poorest states to have access to insurance services. We are also supporting the institutional strengthening of the microfinance sector in countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh, thereby indirectly assisting the development of a range of financial products including micro-insurance. Going forward, DFID is considering how to further enhance the provision of affordable micro-insurance in a range of countries, in line with its 2011-15 business plan commitment. Further details will be released in due course.

Developing Countries: Money Laundering

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking in co-operation with the International Monetary Fund to tackle money laundering in developing countries. [30207]

Mr O'Brien: Corruption seriously undermines development efforts, and impacts most upon the poor. Anti-money laundering is an important tool for increasing the chances of getting caught, and sanctioned, when using the proceeds of corruption. Support for strengthening anti-money laundering systems in developing countries is a core dimension of the Department for International Development's (DFID's) anti-corruption strategy.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) aims to improve global compliance with anti-money laundering standards. It is addressing this through targeted assistance to countries on the basis of need and willingness to engage, with a focus on low and middle income countries. Assistance is offered through a module-based approach tailored to each country's context, and includes: needs assessments; risk-based approach to anti-money laundering; strengthening the legal and regulatory framework; and enforcement of anti-money laundering regimes by national institutions. Recipients of assistance since mid 2009 include Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria, Vietnam and the West Bank and Gaza.

DFID has committed £1.3 million to the IMF for this work from January 2010 to April 2014. This is provided through a multi-donor trust fund (other donors include Switzerland, France, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Canada and Japan). DFID sits on the Steering Committee for the Trust Fund.

Great Lakes: Agriculture

Eric Joyce: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the potential role for agricultural development in providing *(a)* an incentive to desist from conflict and *(b)* a subsequent peace dividend for the Great Lakes region. [29981]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has not done such an assessment for the countries in Great Lakes region specifically, but our experience in post-conflict environments is that economic interventions in agriculture can be an important tool for stabilisation. For example, in Rwanda, agricultural development will continue to be the primary driver for poverty reduction which, in turn, should help to reduce conflict. In addition, DFID's Land Tenure programme is helping to reduce conflicts by settling land disputes in Rwanda.

DFID is also supporting the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union, through a £10 million contribution to the CAADP Multi Donor Trust fund at the World Bank. The CAADP is assisting countries in the Great Lakes region to establish long term investment plans for agriculture, including increasing the proportion of national budgets for agriculture.

India: Agriculture

Mr Virendra Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment his Department has made of the effects of climate change on *(a)* agriculture and *(b)* food security in India. [30007]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) has supported a number of publicly available assessments of the impact of climate change on agriculture and food security. These are available at:

www.worlp.com

and

www.mprlp.in

Economic and population growth is increasing the demand for water, food and energy in many countries, India included. Our assessment is that climate change is compounding this and will impact on agriculture and food security in India in a number of ways. Temperature increases, unpredictable monsoons and disease could reduce agricultural productivity, which could contribute to further increases in the price of food, food insecurity and child malnutrition. The poorest people are likely to feel the hardest impacts, with women and children being most affected.

Mr Virendra Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what steps his Department is taking to seek to ensure that the *(a)* poorest and *(b)* most marginal farmers in India can adapt to climate change in (i) 2010-11, (ii) the next five to 10 years and (iii) the next 50 years; [30008]

(2) what plans his Department has to assist India in its agricultural development. [30138]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) is supporting the poorest and most marginal farmers in the Indian states of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh to increase their income, diversify their livelihoods, improve their food security and better adapt to climate change (through forestry, water resources development, rain-fed farming and decentralising rural administration). In 2010-11, we are supporting 20,680 of the poorest households and 16,503 of the most marginal farmer households in these states to adapt to climate change.

In terms of future plans, the Secretary of State for International Development has launched a bilateral aid review of all DFID country programmes, including India, to ensure that we are giving aid where it is most needed, to help the world's poorest people. We are in close dialogue with the Government of India about the future of the India programme. Details will be announced upon conclusion of the review process.

Mr Virendra Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much the Government has spent on *(a)* agricultural development and *(b)* emergency food aid for India in each of the last five years. [30010]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) spent the following on agricultural development in India in each of the last five years.

Financial year	*£ million*
2009-10	6.7
2008-09	11.2
2007-08	14.4
2006-07	17.1
2005-06	14.2

The UK Government have not provided emergency food aid to India in any of the last five years as the Indian Government have not requested us to.

India: Climate Change

Mr Virendra Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on climate change adaptation for smallholder farmers in India in each of the last five years; and what proportion this represents of *(a)* total spending on climate change overseas, *(b)* total spending on climate change adaptation overseas, *(c)* total spending on climate change in the developing world and *(d)* total spending on climate change adaptation in the developing world in each such year. [30139]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: Our central recording systems do not capture this level of detail for project expenditure. Compiling the requested information would incur disproportionate cost.

The Department for International Development (DFID) recognises that smallholder farmers are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and we take this into account in the design and implementation of a number of our development activities, including through our research programme and our adaptation programmes.

The UK Government have committed to provide £1.5 billion in Fast Start finance over the period 2010-12, to help the developing world carry out the urgent work needed to adapt to climate change, adopt clean technology and reduce emissions from deforestation. In 2010-11 the UK is providing approximately 41% of its Fast Start allocation for adaptation, a significant share of which has been designed to benefit smallholder farmers. The Department is in the course of monitoring and evaluating the impact of these ongoing programmes.

India: Food

Mr Virendra Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the food security situation in India. [30009]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: According to the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), there are 237.7 million undernourished people in India (FAO, 2010). India's 2007 National Family Health Survey (3) estimates that 43% of Indian children are underweight.

The British Government have contributed to the following publicly available assessments of the food security situation in India: the National and state level Rural Food Security Atlases produced by the World Food Programme and the MS Swaminathan Foundation:

http://www.wfp.org.in/

and the International Food Policy Research Institute Hunger and State Level Hunger Indexes:

http://www.ifpri.org/publication/2010-global-hunger-index

http://www.ifpri.org/publication/comparisons-hunger-across-states-india-state-hunger-index

The Department for International Development (DFID) has also recently supported an analysis of the two latest rounds of India's National Family Health Survey. State comparisons show that child nutrition improved most when women had their first child later or had better household access to food grains.

Namibia: Food

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the food security situation in Namibia. [29937]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) provides financial support to the Southern Africa Development Community to strengthen monitoring of, and responses towards, improved food security. Through this programme, DFID has supported the Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) to produce the National Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis (VAA) Comprehensive Assessment in August

2010-11, which includes an assessment of the current state of vulnerability and a prognosis for 2011. Main findings were that immediate food security responses were required for northern populations and that a substantial portion of the population throughout the country had limited access to basic services. The Government of Namibia have taken action to address these findings.

Swaziland: Maternity Services

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the government of Swaziland on the provision of clean and sanitary conditions in maternity units in that country to help prevent the spread of HIV to newborn babies. [30166]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not have a bilateral aid programme in Swaziland.

The UK Government support the call for the elimination of paediatric AIDS and is working with others to scale up prevention of mother to child transmission services.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Experiments: Primates

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the number of wild-caught primates to be used in scientific research in the UK in *(a)* 2015 and *(b)* 2020. [30404]

Lynne Featherstone: Since 1995 Home Office policy has prohibited the use of wild-caught non-human primates except where exceptional and specific justification can be established. Application of these stringent criteria has meant that the Home Office has not authorised the first time use of any wild-caught primates in regulated procedures in the United Kingdom for more than 10 years. I cannot foresee any future circumstances in which such exceptional and specific justification would be established.

Asylum

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her policy is on no-notice removals for families unsuccessful in seeking asylum. [30140]

Damian Green: Since the ruling in the High Court on 16 July, the UK Border Agency's policy is not to carry out reduced notice removals. The agency's policy is to give at least 72 hours notice of removal. However, previous to the injunction issued on 21 May 2010, in exceptional circumstances where the removal could not be managed in any other way, a policy of giving a reduced period of notice was used.

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps her Department plans to take to ensure that asylum-seeking families have access to good quality legal advice in the early stages of the asylum-seeking process. [30141]

Damian Green: We work closely with the Ministry of Justice, the Legal Services Commission (LSC) and the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) to ensure that applicants are able to access appropriate levels of advice.

The LSC has introduced the Immigration and Asylum Accreditation Scheme (IAAS), which requires all advisers doing publicly funded work to be accredited to an appropriate standard and this became compulsory in August 2005.

On 15 November the Early Legal Advice Project (ELAP) was launched. This project is a new approach that will be tested in the midlands and east region to improve decisions through early legal advice. ELAP will ensure that all applicants, including asylum seeking families, in the midlands and east region have the opportunity to access legal advice regarding their asylum claim early on in the process. The legal representatives that are taking part in ELAP have all been approved by the Legal Services Commission (LSC) and are required to be level 2 qualified.

Asylum: Deportation

Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers identified for deportation were removed from their accommodation prior to deportation at an hour before 8 am since January 2010. [30351]

Damian Green: For the period January to November 2010, the UK Border Agency arrested a total of 585 failed asylum seekers on enforcement visits from their residential accommodation between midnight and 7.59 am. Most of these arrests took place between 6 am and 7 am following an individual case-by-case risk assessment which takes into account the likelihood of failed asylum seekers being at the premises at the time of arrest or the need to travel to the airport in time for the flight.

The figures provided are sourced from management information tools; they are not quality assured under National Statistics protocols and are subject to change. The figures provided do not constitute part of National Statistics and therefore should be treated as provisional.

Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps her Department takes to inform the schools of children of asylum seekers who have been deported with these children of the action that has been taken. [30484]

Damian Green: The procedures the UK Border Agency has in place for the removal and deportation of all categories of immigration offenders, including failed asylum seekers and their families, are set out in the Enforcement Instructions and Guidance (EIG) manual available to view on the UK Border Agency website at:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/policyandlaw/guidance/enforcement

In chapter 45 of this guidance staff are instructed to notify local child welfare agencies, which include schools, of a family's detention and removal from the UK.

The UK Border Agency is currently piloting a new approach to managing family cases. A key element of this is better communication and partnership working with other agencies to manage families within the immigration system who are in their care.

Asylum: Finance

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will take steps to link the level of support payments to asylum seekers to changes to the level of benefit payments. [30149]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: The UK Border Agency reviews the level of support provided to destitute asylum seekers annually. In doing so, a number of factors are considered which may include changes to the level of benefit payments. There are currently no plans to make a direct link between the level of support provided to asylum seekers and the level of benefit payments.

Asylum: Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people presented themselves for asylum to the immigration authorities in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; and what the outcome of each application was. [30174]

Damian Green: The information is not held centrally and can be obtained only through examination of individual records at disproportionate cost.

Asylum: Work Permits

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she has assessed the merits of allowing asylum seekers to apply for a work permit after six months; and if she will make a statement. [30377]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: The Government believe it is important to maintain a distinction between economic migration and asylum and that is why an asylum applicant's claim needs to have been outstanding for at least one year before they can apply for permission to work. This is in line with our obligations under the EU reception conditions directive.

We have considered the merits of reducing this threshold, but we believe such a reduction would encourage those who are not genuinely in need of protection to apply for asylum for economic reasons.

Criminal Records

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the effect on the proportion of disclosures processed within existing target times of the planned budget reduction for the Criminal Records Bureau; and if she will make a statement. [30137]

Lynne Featherstone: The Criminal Records Bureau and the Home Office Board will work closely together over the next four years to ensure that any planned staff reductions identified as part of the spending review will not have a detrimental effect on the agency's performance.

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* expenditure and *(b)* income of the Criminal Records Bureau was in each year since 2005. [30220]

Lynne Featherstone: The following table shows the income and the expenditure of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) in each year since 2005.

£ million

	Income	*Expenditure*
2004-05	65.2	73.2
2005-06	75.9	78.1
2006-07	93.2	79.5
2007-08	97.8	88.1
2008-09	113.2	107
2009-10	127.2	122.8

Criminal Records: Reading West

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those resident in Reading West constituency were subject to more than one Criminal Records Bureau check in the most recent 12 months for which figures are available. [29995]

Lynne Featherstone: The information is not available in the absence of the particular constituency post codes. However, nationally, the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) issued 4.3 million certificates during the period 1 December 2009 to 30November 2010. Of these, approximately 504,000 were repeat applications. The CRB can provide the information requested if the hon. Member writes to the chief executive with the constituency postcodes that apply.

There is a common myth that a CRB certificate cannot be used for more than one position: this is not true. Currently, there is scope for checks to be ported but, because some of the checks won't include convictions that could have occurred after the date of issue, some employers choose not to accept a previously issued check.

The Government have pledged to review the criminal records regime. Among other aims, the review will consider the fundamental principles behind vetting and barring and will determine how CRB checks may be less bureaucratic. The review will be completed early next year.

Deportation

Andrew Percy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many removal directions for illegal migrants have been cancelled by the UK Border Agency in the latest period for which figures are available; what the reasons were in each case; how many of these removal directions involved non-refundable flights; and how much it cost the agency to cancel such flights. [30243]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: 3,584[1] removal directions were cancelled by the UK Border Agency for non-asylum cases for the period 1 April-4 December 2010. This figure is based on instances of failed removals not numbers of individuals, ie one person could fail to be removed on a number of occasions.

The reasons in each case, the number of cases involving non-refundable flights and the cost to the agency to cancel such flights could be obtained by a detailed examination of individual records only at disproportionate cost.

There are many reasons for the failure of removal directions. Among the most common are: further or additional representations received on a case (the most common of these are judicial review applications and initial asylum claims); disruption by the individual being removed; and cancellation of flights.

The vast majority of tickets booked for removals are either fully or part refundable.

[1] These figures are provisional, based on management information, not subject to the detailed checks that apply for National Statistics and may be subject to change.

Andrew Percy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many removal directions for foreign national prisoners have been cancelled by the UK Border Agency in the latest period for which figures are available; what the reasons were in each case; how many of these removal directions involved non-refundable flights; and how much it cost the Agency to cancel such flights. [30244]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* 1,143[1] removal directions were cancelled by UK Border Agency for foreign national prisoner (FNP) cases for the period 1 April-4 December 2010. This figure is based on instances of failed removals not numbers of individuals, i.e. one person could fail to be removed on a number of occasions. These FNP failed removals form part of the asylum and non asylum data supplied in separate answers, they are not additional failed removals.

The reasons in each case, the number of cases involving non-refundable flights and the cost to the Agency to cancel such flights could be obtained only by a detailed examination of individual records at disproportionate cost.

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[1] These figures are provisional, based on management information, not subject to the detailed checks that apply for National Statistics and may be subject to change.

Andrew Percy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many removal directions for failed asylum seekers have been cancelled by the UK Border Agency in the latest period for which figures are available; what the reasons were in each case; how many of these removal directions involved non-refundable flights; and how much it cost the Agency to cancel such flights. [30245]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* 4,700[1] removal directions were cancelled by the UK Border Agency for asylum cases for the period 1 April to 4 December 2010. This figure is based on instances of failed removals not numbers of individuals, i.e. one person could fail to be removed on a number of occasions.

The reasons in each case, the number of cases involving non-refundable flights and the cost to the Agency to cancel such flights could be obtained only by a detailed examination of individual records at disproportionate cost.

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[1] These figures are provisional, based on management information, not subject to the detailed checks that apply for National Statistics and may subject to change.

Deportation: Offenders

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how much was spent on the facilitated return scheme in each year since 2007-08; [24209]

(2) how many foreign national prisoners received financial assistance under the facilitated return scheme in the last 12 months; [24210]

(3) how many foreign national prisoners have received financial assistance under the facilitated return scheme since 1 October 2010; [24176]

(4) how much has been spent on the facilitated return scheme since 1 October 2010; [24178]

(5) how many foreign national prisoners who received financial assistance under the facilitated return scheme are known to have returned to the UK in each of the last five years; [24179]

(6) what mechanism she has put in place to prevent a beneficiary of the facilitated return scheme returning to the UK. [24181]

Damian Green: The Facilitated Return Scheme (FRS) accounted for approximately 30% of the 5,530 foreign national prisoner removals from the UK in 2009, and for around 50% of the 2,425 foreign national prisoner removals in quarters 1 and 2 of 2010. We are unable to advise at the current time the numbers who have received financial assistance and the amount spent on FRS since October 2010. Removal figures for quarter 3 of 2010 was published at the end of November, and for quarter four early in 2011. Once this information has been published the UK Border Agency will be able to confirm the number of foreign national prisoners removed under FRS and the average amount of assistance provided during those periods.

Expenditure on FRS from inception in October 2006 to March 2009 was approximately £4.3 million. The cost of running the scheme for 2009-10 was £7.1 million (including £2.3 million of EU funding) and for 2010-11 is expected to be £9.7 million (including £2.7 million of EU funding). This is a slightly higher figure than previously reported for 2009-10 as the scheme has been successful in removing a larger number of foreign national prisoners than estimated.

The Facilitated Return Scheme is a practical solution that not only saves the taxpayer money in the long run, but also means foreign criminals are removed as soon as possible, denying them the opportunity to re-offend or drag out the removals process. All foreign national prisoners are entered on our watch list when removed, so checks can be made to prevent those who are barred and those who have no right from re-entering the UK.

Only in the most exceptional circumstances would an individual who had taken the FRS package be approved for re-entry to the UK, or for their exclusion to be lifted by the Home Secretary. These cases are considered very carefully and in line with policy. We are aware of two individuals removed under FRS who have later successfully applied to have their exclusion orders lifted, to allow them to return to the UK. We are also aware of a small number of individuals who have re-entered illegally having taken up FRS. In such cases we take urgent action to remove them from the UK. They would not be eligible to re-apply for the scheme.

In order to make the scheme more affordable and bring it in line with other assisted voluntary, return programmes, it has been necessary to reduce the amount of assistance given to those who leave the country under FRS. As of 1 October 2010, those who apply for and are accepted onto the scheme will receive a reduced cash payment amount. We anticipate that high numbers of individuals will continue to take up the scheme and we will monitor the level of applications over the coming months.

Detention Centres: Christmas

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements have been made for residential and operational staffing of immigration removal centres over Christmas 2010 and the new year period. [30144]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* Immigration removal centres operate throughout the year, including Christmas 2010 and the new year period. Staffing will be maintained at the standard level for each centre to provide continuity of service and to ensure a safe environment for all persons detained.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether Ministers in her Department have signed any authorisations for the continued detention of children at immigration removal centres beyond 28 days which provide for the detention of children during Christmas 2010; [30145]

(2) whether the UK Border Agency has made arrangements in respect of children detained at immigration removal centres during Christmas 2010; [30146]

(3) how many families she expects to be detained at immigration removal centres during Christmas 2010. [30147]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* Current Ministers have not authorised any detentions of children in immigration removal centres beyond 28 days. The Government are committed to ending the detention of children for immigration purposes and a review is currently under way to consider how this can be done in a way which protects the welfare of children and ensures that families with no right to be in the UK leave. The Government will make an announcement before the House rises for Christmas on our plans for doing this.

Entry Clearances: Overseas Students

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will take into account the conclusions of the British Council's report on Global value training - the value of UK education and training exports: an update, when considering changes to the rules governing student visas. [30222]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* This report focused on the value to the UK economy of UK education and training, but does not relate directly to the value of international students entering through Tier 4 of the points-based system. For example, it includes income generated for UK institutions by campuses overseas, and off-campus expenditure of business visitors to the UK who happen to be staying in university accommodation.

Global Peace and Unity Conference

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether her Department monitored the presence of banned *(a)* organisations and *(b)* materials at the Global Peace and Unity conference of 23-24 October 2010. [27546]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office did not monitor the presence of banned organisations and materials at the Global Peace and Unity conference of 23-24 October 2010.

Human Trafficking

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions she has had on international collaboration to combat human trafficking; and if she will make a statement. [30263]

Damian Green: The Government recognise the importance of international collaboration in tackling human trafficking.

My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and I met the UNHCR High Commissioner, Antonio Guterres, to discuss human trafficking. I also recently met the Afghan Minister for Refugees and Repatriation, Dr Jamaher Anwary, to discuss the issue of trafficking.

The Government have focused their international effort through the European Union and other regional organisations such as the Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe.

Immigration Controls: Higher Education

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many visas to work in the UK have been granted to scientists wishing to take up employment at a UK university in each of the last three years. [30338]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* Information on visas that have been issued to applicants who intend to work (a) in a particular profession, or (b) for a particular employer or type of employer, is not available from the UK Border Agency's central records. The information requested could only be produced by checking individual records at disproportionate cost.

Immigration: South East

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 11 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 456W, on immigration: South East, how many records remain open on the database to be dealt with by the Case Resolution Directorate under legacy rules. [30183]

Damian Green: When the asylum legacy cohort was announced in July 2006 by the former Home Secretary (John Reid), he stated that there were an estimated 400-450,000 paper and electronic records that required review. The cohort is not static, due to issues such as errors, duplicates and paper and dependant records that have not yet been entered on to our databases. It is therefore not possible to provide an accurate figure for the number of records that remain open.

The chief executive of the UK Border Agency regularly updates the Home Affairs Select Committee on progress with this cohort on a regular basis. As reported in November 2010 the Case Resolution Directorate had concluded 334,500 cases up to the end of September 2010.

Members: Correspondence

Mr Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when her Department plans to respond to the letters of 10 August and 30 September 2010 from the hon. Member for Basildon and Billericay on her constituent Mr P. Ginn. [20004]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 28 October 2010]:* I apologise for the delay in replying. My right hon. Friend the Minister for Security replied on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 7 December 2010.

National Extremism Tactical Co-ordination Unit

Mr Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding her Department provided to the National Extremism Tactical Co-ordination Unit in the last 12 months. [26928]

Nick Herbert: We do not disclose details of funding provided to the National Extremism Tactical Co-ordination Unit (NETCU) on security grounds.

Offences against Children: International Cooperation

Mary Macleod: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will make representations to her international counterparts on international agreements on legislation against child pornography. [30273]

James Brokenshire: The UK strongly supports work to promote effective legislation against child pornography. We will work both bilaterally and multilaterally to promote international co-operation to tackle this crime, and will ensure that the excellent work, of the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre and their international partners continues.

Police: Manpower

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* police officers, *(b)* police community support officers and *(c)* other staff are primarily assigned to work on (i) the Police National Database, (ii) the Police National Computer and (iii) the IMPACT programme. [26077]

Mrs May *[holding answer 23 November 2010]:* The project to deliver the Police National Database (PND) forms part of the National Policing Improvement Agency's (NPIA) IMPACT Programme. Within the NPIA there are 62 staff working on the IMPACT of whom 21 are police officers.

There are no Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) assigned to this work within the NPIA. There are also 226 staff working in Police National Computer (PNC) Services within the NPIA. However none of these staff are police officers or PCSOs.

At a local level, police forces will also have staff assigned to work on the IMPACT Programme and the PNC. However, this information is not held centrally.

Reoffenders: Dartford

Gareth Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of those normally resident in Dartford constituency arrested had a previous conviction in each of the last five years. [30414]

Nick Herbert: Information is not collected centrally linking those arrested with previous convictions.

UK Border Agency: Trafficking

Mrs Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the effects of reductions in UK Border Agency staff in Liverpool on the Agency's ability to tackle people trafficking; and if she will make a statement. [30000]

Damian Green: The spending review settlement for the UK Border Agency will mean that we need to reduce our staff by about 5,200 to around 18,000 by 2015. We are still working through the detailed planning implications and will let our staff, partners and the public know as soon as the plans are clear.

Deterring, disrupting and detecting people trafficking is a responsibility that we share with other law enforcement agencies, such as the police and Serious and Organised Crime Agency. The UK Border Agency continues to be committed to the strong regional and national partnerships that are central to our approach to combat this brutal form of organised crime.

Visas: Students

Angie Bray: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans she has for the future of the student visa system. [30053]

Damian Green: On 7 December the Government launched a public consultation on reform of the student immigration system. A copy has been placed in the House Library.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many student visa applications from each country were *(a)* accepted and *(b)* rejected for study for (i) English language courses, (ii) foundation courses, (iii) undergraduate degrees, (iv) postgraduate taught degrees and (v) postgraduate research degrees in each of the last three years. [30084]

Damian Green: A table has been placed in the Library showing the number of student visas that were *(a* issued and *(b)* refused for each nationality in each of the last three years. The UK Border Agency is unable to break the figures down into type of course or level of study from central records. This information could be produced only by checking individual records which would incur disproportionate cost.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what his Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30034]

Gregory Barker: The Department of Energy and Climate Change has not allocated any specific budget for conferences in 2010-11.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each year since its inception. [28383]

Gregory Barker: The Department of Energy and Climate Change was created on 3 October 2008.

The cost of each of these items could be determined only at disproportionate cost as transaction records do not separately identify these specific types of expenditure.

Downstream Oil Industry Forum

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (1) when he expects the report commissioned from the Downstream Oil Industry Forum to be completed; and if he will publish that report; [30832]

(2) what terms of reference he has issued to the Downstream Oil Industry Task Force; what the name is of each member of that Task Force; and how frequently it meets. [30833]

Andrew Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (1) what terms of reference are for his Department's Downstream Oil Industry Task Force; what the name is of each member of the task force; and how frequently it meets; [30861]

(2) when he expects to receive the report commissioned from the Downstream Oil Industry Forum; and if he will publish that report. [30868]

Gregory Barker: The Downstream Oil Industry Forum is the main discussion forum for strategic engagement between the downstream-oil sector and the Government. It seeks to meet on a six monthly basis and is chaired by DECC officials. Membership comprises representatives from: the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), the UK Petroleum Industry Association (UKPIA), the Downstream Fuel Association (DFA), the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers (FPS), UKLPG (acting on behalf of Liquid Petroleum Gas distributors), the Tank Storage Association (TSA), RMI Petrol, representatives of the devolved administrations and the Office of Fair Trading (OFT). Representatives of other organisations can be invited as necessary. Individual representatives from the member organisations may change depending on availability.

Work has been conducted to examine the resilience of the Downstream Oil Industry by a task group of the DOIF; a study carried out by Wood Mackenzie on behalf of DECC on this topic has been completed and is available on DECC's internet site. Supplementary work on aspects of the Wood Mackenzie report has been conducted within DECC and a further study has been carried out by UKPIA looking at the UK's refining sector; this study can be obtained directly from UKPIA. I am currently considering the work conducted to date and fully support the DOIF's activity in relation to this important sector of the economy.

Environment Protection: Employment

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will estimate the number of green jobs in the UK economy. [30309]

Gregory Barker: Government-commissioned research indicates that, in 2008-09, employment in the UK Low Carbon and Environmental Goods and Services sector was approximately 910,000 and is projected to increase to over a million by the middle of the decade. This research is available online at:

http://www.berr.gov.uk/Policies/business-sectors/low-carbon-business-opportunities/market-intelligence

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (1) what assessment he has made of the likely effect on the UK oil refining industry of the introduction of Phase Three of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme; [30430]

(2) whether the introduction of benchmarks for Phase Three of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme will be phased; and if he will make a statement; [30431]

(3) what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* Ministers in his Department and *(c)* officials in his Department have held with officials of the European Commission since May 2010 on the likely effect on the UK oil industry of Phase Three of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [30489]

Gregory Barker: My officials are in close contact with the European Commission and other member states about the implementation of Phase III of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS). This includes discussing the rules to determine the amount of emission allowances to be freely allocated to installations (including off-shore oil and gas and the oil refining industry) which will be voted on later this week in the EU Climate Change Committee. The benchmarks will apply from 2013.

My officials have undertaken assessment of the effects on all sectors from the introduction of Phase III of the EU ETS. The analysis can be seen in the April 2009 impact assessment 'Impact Assessment on the EU Climate and Energy package and the revised EU ETS Directive':

http://www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/77_20090423091800_e_@@_euclimateenergypackage.pdf

Fuel Poverty: Walsall

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what his most recent estimate is of the number of households living in fuel poverty in Walsall South constituency. [30929]

Gregory Barker: In 2006, the most recent year for which sub-regional figures are available, there were around 5,000 fuel poor households in the Walsall South constituency.

Green Deal

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the Green Deal financing mechanism interest rates are conducive to high levels of household take-up; and if he will make a statement. [30652]

Gregory Barker: It is essential that Green Deal finance interest rates are as low as possible. The Department is therefore acting in three key ways. Firstly, we are progressing discussions with the finance community regarding appropriate financing solutions; and in particular, low interest investment from the capital markets. Secondly, we are designing secondary legislation so that risks to investors from default and cash flow interruption are minimised.

Finally, we are taking steps to ensure that the Green Deal will operate at scale and thereby enable high-value, low cost financing solutions. Importantly, we will ensure that the energy company obligation supports the Green Deal. We are also taking foreshadowing powers through the new Energy Bill to ensure that by 2015, the Government are able—if necessary and appropriate—to require private landlords to improve the least energy efficient properties.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Affordable Housing: Construction

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will publish the modelling undertaken by his Department to calculate the number of new affordable homes to be funded through his proposed increase for rents for new social housing tenants. [30216]

Grant Shapps: We will be publishing our impact assessment on the affordable rent model early next year.

Anti-Semitism

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps his Department has taken to combat anti-Semitism since July 2010; what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of these steps; and if he will make a statement. [29814]

Andrew Stunell: The Coalition Government will publish the three-year on response to the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism on Wednesday December 15 which will highlight the effectiveness and steps we have taken to combat anti-Semitism.

Community Land Trusts

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will place in the Library a copy of the report of the task force on Community Land Trusts produced by Professor Carl Dayson. [30106]

Grant Shapps: This report was not commissioned by, or for, the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Councillors

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate he has made of the number of councillors who sit on both district and county councils. [29480]

Robert Neill: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on this issue on 16 June 2010, *Official Report*, column 447W.

Councillors: Business Interests

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans he has for a national register of councillors' interests. [29479]

Robert Neill: Our proposals for abolishing the Standards Board regime involve that in future, publicly available registers of members' interests are maintained locally by councils, reflecting that the accountability of councils and their members is to their local electorate. We are keen for this information to be published online in an open and standardised format.

Departmental Energy

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the cost was of *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas supplied to his Department's offices at Eland House in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [29669]

Robert Neill: The energy spend at DCLG's headquarter building, Eland House is shown in the table. The table shows the monthly cost for electricity and gas for the last 12 months, the figures are inclusive of VAT.

		£
	Electricity	*Gas*
October 2009	37,563.68	1,640.96
November 2009	36,438.21	5,044.02
December 2009	37,117.40	9,458.31
January 2010	40,019.86	16,451.42
February 2010	36,795.55	10,864.31
March 2010	39,745.01	8,605.00
April 2010	35,310.98	3,861.04
May 2010	36,173.36	2,571.99
June 2010	37,114.48	1,838.68
July 2010	39,076.46	1,971.02
August 2010	34,342.47	1,623.89
September 2010	31,613.27	1,954.35
October 2010	30,149.62	2,397.39

The Department is committed to reducing the carbon emissions of its estate by 10% from May 2010 to May 2011. This will help reduce the cost of utility bills to the taxpayer.

Departmental Lobbying

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with reference to his Department's press release of 5 August 2010, which arms' length bodies with his Department's area of responsibility have cancelled contracts for lobbying services. [29365]

Robert Neill: The Department has instructed its arm's length bodies to cease any contracts with public affairs consultancies.

The Audit Commission gave notice to terminate its contract with Connect Public Affairs on 2 February 2010 following public controversy over its lobbying activity. Connect confirmed their contractual 28 day notice period.

Both London and Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporations have confirmed that their contracts have been cancelled. London's contract with London Communications Agency is being allowed to expire on 31 January 2011 to avoid nugatory costs but no further activity is being undertaken under the terms of this contract.

West Northants Development Corporation appointed Chelgate Ltd in November 2008. This contract was terminated in May 2010.

The independent Housing Ombudsman Limited previously engaged APCO. The most recent contract completed in January 2010.

The Tenant Services Authority also had a contract with APCO. The original contract expired in February 2009. A three-month extension with reduced services was then agreed for April to June 2009. No further contracts were entered into.

Ordnance Survey had a contract with Mandate Communications. This contract with Mandate was terminated in May 2010.

The Fire Service College used Four Communications in respect of a residential planning application. The contract ended when the college obtained planning consent on 2 June 2010.

Departmental Marketing

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much his Department has spent on promotional materials since 6 May 2010. [30776]

Robert Neill: The Department has spent nothing on promotional materials since 6 May 2010.

Departmental Public Consultation

Dr Whitehead: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what his policy is on the citing of party political publications as evidence in consultation documents issued by his Department. [27198]

Robert Neill: The Department for Communities and Local Government draws evidence from the widest possible range of sources in the preparation of consultation documents.

I would note that the Conservative party's open source planning green paper is explicitly referenced in the coalition agreement as providing the guiding principles for the Government's planning reforms.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what information his Department holds on plans for the level of its budget in 2010-11 made prior to May 2010. [29382]

Robert Neill: At pre-Budget report 2008, DCLG's planned budgets were reported as £6.0 billion capital and £4.6 billion resource.

In the March Budget 2009, £144 million additional capital was allocated for the Housing Pledge and shortly afterwards a further £200 million capital was allocated to support the fiscal stimulus. The 2009 Budget also reported Public Value Programme resource savings of £100 million from DCLG. These changes were incorporated in budget plans set out in Annex C of the Department's Annual Report 2009, published in June 2009.

At the pre-Budget report in December 2009, further resource savings were announced, to be made by 2012-13 (that is, in 2010-11 and 2011-12), as follows:

> Public Value Programme cross-Government savings of £5 billion, of which DCLG's contribution was announced as £500 million broken down as:
>
> £340 million largely for regeneration programmes, and:
>
> £160 million for smaller DCLG programmes.
>
> Operational Efficiency Programme cross-Government savings of £11 billion, but DCLG's contributions was not specified.

At Budget in March 2010, further details on DCLG's contributions to the resource savings were announced, to be made by 2012-13, as follows:

> The Public Value Programme savings of £500 million were broken down further as:
>
> £300 million from rationalising Regional Development Agency regeneration spending and programmes;
>
> £40 million by concluding New Deal for Communities;
>
> £160 million further savings on smaller DCLG programmes, including £35 million from housing benefit costs and £25 million from ending smaller CLG-funded time-limited communities programmes.
>
> DCLG's contribution to the £11 billion Operational Efficiency Programme savings were announced as £200 million and broken down as follows:
>
> £130 million savings from back office, procurement and consultancy and marketing;
>
> £70 million savings from arm's length body rationalisation.

Before May 2010, only £100 million of the total DCLG savings above had been announced as relating specifically to 2010-11 and these were incorporated into the budgets in the Annual Report 2009.

The remainder of the savings, were not allocated to discrete financial years (as indicated above) but were to be made before 2012-13.

Links to referenced documents:

PBR 2008, table B18, pg. 214

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100407010852/
http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/
pbr08_completereport_1721.pdf

Budget 2009—Table 6.1, pg. 130

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100407010852/
http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/
bud09_completereport_2520.pdf

Departmental Annual Report 2009

http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/
1281142.pdf

Pre-Budget report 2009—pgs. 108-116

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100407010852/
http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pbr09_completereport.pdf

Budget 2010-pg. 93

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100407010852/
http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/budget2010_complete.pdf

DCLG Budget announcement of £200 million OEP savings

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100513032259/
http://communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1516900

EU Law

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by his Department; and what estimate he has made of the cost of each such transposition. [27500]

Robert Neill: The Department for Communities and Local Government currently has one EU directive pending transposition. That EU directive is:

Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings.

It is estimated that it will cost £2.5 million to transpose this directive into domestic legislation.

Fire Services

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what estimate he has made of the likely change in the number of non-firefighter fire service posts to 2015; [30642]

(2) whether he has issued recent guidance on the number of fire stations to be operational in each fire authority area; [30637]

(3) whether he has issued recent guidance on the number of fire appliances necessary to be available in each fire authority area; [30638]

(4) whether he has made a recent estimate of the number of fire fighters necessary to provide adequate emergency fire and rescue cover. [30639]

Robert Neill: Decisions on operational issues such as fire station, fire appliance and firefighter numbers, and associated issues such as non-firefighter posts, are taken by individual fire and rescue authorities as part of the integrated risk management planning process.

The Government are committed to enabling local authorities and local communities to make appropriate decisions at the local level. Fire and rescue authorities are required by the fire and rescue service national framework to have in place and maintain an integrated risk management plan (IRMP) which reflects local need and sets out plans to tackle effectively both existing and potential risks to communities. Each fire and rescue authority's IRMP enables that individual authority to decide how best to provide fire and rescue-related services, including prevention and protection as well as response, with resources being allocated on the basis of the evaluation of risk and where the risks are greatest.

Local requirements are thus determined by local people according to local circumstances.

For those reasons, no formal estimate of firefighter and non-firefighter staffing levels required by fire and rescue services has been made by central Government, and no recent guidance has been issued by central Government on the numbers of fire appliances and firefighters required in each fire and rescue authority area.

I also refer the hon. Member to my letter to him of 6 December 2010 about the comprehensive spending review, a copy of which I placed in the Library of the House.

Government Offices for the Regions: Gallup

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much the Government Offices in each region have paid to Gallup in the last 36 months; and what the purpose was of each item of expenditure. [29381]

Greg Clark: There have been no payments to Gallup from Government office network resources in the last 36 months. There has however, been one payment to Gallup of £834.24 through the Government office for the south-east. This was made from programme funds on behalf of my Department. This expenditure covered the travel costs of Dalia Mogahed, the executive director of the Gallup Centre for Muslim Studies, who provided a key note speech at a Preventing Violent Extremism conference hosted in the south-east.

Homelessness: Rural Areas

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many registered homeless people there are in rural areas in each region of England; and what steps his Department is taking to reduce homelessness in rural areas. [30383]

Grant Shapps: I have placed in the Library of the House a table setting out, for local authorities by rural classification in each statistical region, the number of households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty, the number of households in temporary accommodation, and levels of rough sleeping.

This Government are committed to tackling and preventing homelessness. We have protected Homelessness Grant funding, with £400 million over the spending review period. This will be made available to local authorities and the voluntary sector to support their work to tackle homelessness. We have made an additional £190 million available for discretionary housing payments and other forms of practical support alongside the Government's package of welfare reform measures. We have minimised reductions to the Supporting People programme with £6.5 billion investment secured over the next four years. I have also established a cross-Government working group on homelessness bringing together Ministers from eight Government Departments to address the complex causes of homelessness and rough sleeping.

Housing Market

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps he is taking to encourage house price growth in the next five years. [30459]

Grant Shapps: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave her on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 483W.

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects annual house price growth to return to positive figures. [30460]

Grant Shapps: The Department for Communities and Local Government does not publish housing market forecasts.

According to the recent house price forecasts produced by the new independent Office of Budget Responsibility for the 'Economic and fiscal outlook' report this autumn, and the latest average of the HM Treasury's independent forecasts, house prices are expected to rise from 2012 onwards.

Details can be found at:

http://budgetresponsibility.independent.gov.uk/econ-fiscal-outlook.html

http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/quarterlybulletin/qb090203.pdf

Housing: Regeneration

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects to announce his plans for the future of the Housing Market Renewal Grant. [30770]

Grant Shapps: Following the spending review announcement, the Housing Market Renewal Fund will cease to be run as currently structured in 2010-11. Post March 2011 it will be for local authorities to decide whether to continue Housing Market Renewal partnerships and bid for funding to allow them to take forward market renewal projects, and to consider how new incentive schemes such as the New Homes Bonus could benefit their areas.

I also refer the right hon. Member to my letter on the spending review's settlement for housing of 20 October 2010, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Local Government Finance

Mr Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government who will conduct his Department's review of the local government grants system. [30482]

Robert Neill: The local government resource review will consider proposals to introduce greater incentives for local authorities to promote economic growth by allowing them to retain locally raised business rates, and introduce new powers to enable local authorities to carry out tax increment financing. The review will be carried out by my Department.

Local Government: Bank Services

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what provision he has made for the capitalisation of local authority debt arising from lost deposits in Icelandic banks over the next 20 years. [30422]

Robert Neill: Local authorities have been able to apply this year to capitalise impairment charges (excluding interest) in respect of potential losses of investments in Icelandic banks, for assessment against the exceptional financial difficulties criteria in the published guidance. The Department intends to notify applicant authorities of its decisions shortly.

Multiple Occupation: Licensing

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 13 July 2010, *Official Report*, column 693W, on multiple occupation: licensing, if he will take steps to collect centrally figures for licensed houses in multiple occupation in each local authority area for the purpose of assisting the monitoring of the effectiveness of legislation in addressing sub-standard accommodation. [29288]

Andrew Stunell: The collection of data centrally by DCLG on the register of licensed houses of multiple occupation has been suspended and its continued collection is subject to an internal review of all DCLG statistical data collections as part of the new Government's goal of reducing the burdens of data reporting requirements on local government. The Department's statistics plan will be subject to a public consultation in early 2011. Individual local authorities are required to maintain a register of houses of multiple occupation licensable in their area.

Supporting People Programme: Nottinghamshire

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he has had discussions with Nottinghamshire county council on the proposed reduction in Supporting People programme funding in the spending review period. [29608]

Andrew Stunell: The Government are committed to protecting the most vulnerable in our society and, in taking difficult decisions to reduce the deficit, has limited reductions in Supporting People funding. We have secured investment of £6.5 billion for the Supporting People programme over the next four years. Local areas will continue to take decisions informed by local need in commissioning housing-related support services and will have increased flexibility in meeting that need, as the Supporting People funding is included in the general formula grant from April 2011.

Officials within my Department have spoken with Nottinghamshire county council to clarify the proposed reductions to the Supporting People programme and the timeframe within which these administrative savings will take place.

Travellers: Children

Mr George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate he has made of the number of Traveller families with children who have no fixed abode. [29858]

Andrew Stunell: The July 2010 caravan count showed there were 3,636 caravans which have no authorised place to stop. The caravan count does not capture the detail of family type and so specific figures for Traveller families with children are not available.

Mr George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many Traveller families with children were recorded as having a fixed residence in each year since 2001. [29859]

Andrew Stunell: The twice yearly caravan count does not capture the detail of family type and so specific figures for Traveller families with children are not available. The caravan count shows the following figures of authorised Traveller caravans in England since 2001:

Period of count	*Caravans on socially rented sites*	*Caravans on authorised private sites*
January 2001	6,336	4,564
July 2001	6,201	4,255
January 2002	6,178	4,660
July 2002	6,145	4,571
January 2003	6,138	4,806
July 2003	6,042	4,684
January 2004	5,848	4,890
July 2004	5,976	4,904
January 2005	6,427	5,502
July 2005	6,454	5,371
January 2006	6,636	5,838
July 2006	6,560	5,815
January 2007	6,564	6,509
July 2007	6,605	6,552
January 2008	6,696	7,351
July 2008	6,553	7,083
January 2009	6,785	7,400
July 2009	6,603	7,105
January 2010	6,870	7,866
July 2010	6,862	7,648

UN Food and Agricultural Organisation

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what information his Department holds on the level of compliance of local authorities with the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber; [27833]

(2) what assessment he has made of the compliance of *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* its non-departmental public bodies with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's criteria for sourcing sustainable timber. [27856]

Robert Neill: The Department does not hold such information.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Apprentices

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent steps he has taken to promote apprenticeship schemes; and if he will make a statement. [30305]

Mr Hayes: This Government are committed to increasing the number of apprenticeships. In the comprehensive spending review, we announced that we will increase investment in adult apprenticeships by up to £250 million during this Parliament. By 2014-15 financial year we will have in place sufficient funding for 75,000 more adult apprenticeships places than under the previous Government's plans.

In this current public expenditure climate we must realise that expanding and improving the apprenticeship programme depends in no small measure on our ability to persuade a larger and more diverse range of businesses to employ apprentices. We are therefore reducing bureaucracy making the system simpler for employers and are considering how we might better support employers through improved funding arrangements. In November, we joined farces with business leaders and the National Apprenticeships Service (NAS) to launch a new campaign to urge more employers to take on apprenticeships.

In February 2011 the National Apprenticeship Service will be co-ordinating National Apprenticeship Week which will see apprentices, employers, and providers showcase the benefits of apprenticeship programmes and the value apprentices bring to organisations.

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent discussions he has had with local authorities on their role in promoting apprenticeships; and if he will make a statement. [30306]

Mr Hayes: The most recent discussions with local authority representatives were through our Skills for Sustainable Growth Strategy consultation events. We are fully aware of local authorities' important role in promoting apprenticeships.

The executive chair and chief operating officer of the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) have also visited a number of local authorities to discuss apprenticeships issues; including exploring opportunities for representatives from local authorities to be involved in apprenticeship week from 7-11 February 2011.

Many local authorities are already active in encouraging employers in their areas to employ apprentices, in offering apprenticeships to their own new and existing staff, and in using procurement as a means of encouraging their suppliers to recruit apprentices.

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many higher apprenticeship *(a)* starts and *(b)* completions there were in the last 12 months. [30429]

Mr Hayes: The following table shows the number of higher level apprenticeship programme/framework starts and achievements in England for 2009/10, based on information for the year to date.

Apprenticeship programme/framework starts and achievements, 2009/10

	2009/10 (provisional)	
	Starts	*Achievements*
Higher level apprenticeship (level 4 or higher)	1,500	200

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
Source:
Individualised Learner Record

This Government are committed to increasing the number of apprenticeships, in particular, advanced and higher apprenticeships. British employers currently face a workforce with insufficient skills at intermediate technician and associate professional level, critical to many industries of the future. Expanding level 3 and level 4 apprenticeships will make a significant contribution to remedying the shortage of people with this level of qualification.

Information on the number of apprenticeship starts is published in a quarterly statistical first release (SFR). The latest SFR was published on 16 November 2010

http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/statistics/statisticalfirstrelease/sfr_current

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many apprentices he expects there to be in *(a)* 2010 and *(b)* each year to 2015. [30476]

Mr Hayes: There were 273,900 Apprenticeship programme starts in 2009/10 for all ages, based on information for the year to date.

In support of the coalition Government's principle of greater freedom, "Skills for Sustainable Growth and Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth" set out the abolition of central targets and increased freedom and flexibility for further education colleges and training organisations to respond effectively to the needs of employers, learners and their communities. It will be for individual colleges and training organisations, working directly with their local partners, to determine the offer that best meets the needs of their communities.

From the 2011/12 academic year, there will be a single Adult Skills Budget, with earmarked delivery for apprenticeships. As part of its allocations process later this year, the Skills Funding Agency will set out a minimum expectation of apprenticeships delivery. Further education colleges and training organisations will be able to use their single Adult Skills Budget allocation to expand apprenticeships. However, any diversion of funding away from apprenticeships is to be agreed with the Agency.

By the end of the spending review period we will be spending up to £250 million more than was provided under the previous Government. It means we can carry forward the additional 50,000 adult apprenticeship places announced for 2010-11 into future years and add an extra 25,000 by 2014-15. That will take us to 75,000 more places than under the last Government.

The figures above are for adult apprenticeships, that is people aged 19 and above. Funding for 16 to 18-year-old apprenticeships is provided by the Department for Education. They will publish information on funding and learner numbers for 16 to 18-year-old apprenticeships in their annual funding statement shortly.

Business: Regulation

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has assessed for benchmarking purposes the burden of regulation on each sector of the economy; and if he will make a statement. [30304]

Mr Prisk: The Government recently announced the Growth Review "The path to strong, sustainable and balanced growth". Although there has not been a specific benchmarking exercise to assess the burden of regulation on each sector of the economy, in the first stages of the Growth Review, Departments will be looking at how they can remove the barriers to growth, including regulatory barriers, in six priority sectors: construction, retail, health and life sciences, professional and business services, manufacturing and digital and creative industries. The Government have also introduced a 'one-in, one-out' rule to cut red tape and ensure that no new regulation with a net cost to business is brought in without other regulation being cut by an equal amount.

Departmental Lobbying

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) how much his Department's agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent from the public purse on influencing public policy through *(a)* employing external (i) public affairs companies, (ii) strategic consultancies and (iii) corporate communications firms, *(b)* external marketing and *(c)* other activities in each year since its inception; [23769]

(2) which of his Department's non-departmental public bodies have undertaken activities to influence public policy for which they engaged *(a)* public affairs and *(b)* public relations consultants in each year since its inception; and at what monetary cost in each such year. [23791]

Mr Davey: Information for non-departmental public bodies is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

All expenditure has to be incurred in accordance with the principles of Managing Public Money and the Treasury handbook on Regularity and Propriety.

I have approached the chief executives of the Insolvency Service, Companies House, the National Measurement Office, the Intellectual Property Office and the Skills Funding Agency and they will respond to my hon. Friend directly.

Letter from Peter Mason, dated 16 December 2010:

I am responding in respect of the National Measurement Office (NMO) to your Parliamentary Question tabled 9 November 2010, asking the Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills how much his Department's agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent from the public purse on influencing public policy through a) employing external (i) public affairs companies, (ii) strategic consultancies and (iii) corporate communications firms, (b) external marketing and (c) other activities in each year since its inception.

As an Executive Agency operating within a Government Department, NMO does not spend, and has not spent, any money influencing public policy. In our capacity as advisors to Ministers on various policy areas, including for instance policy on the National Measurement System and on Weights and Measures legislation, we contribute to internal policy making within Government, but we do not use external public affairs companies, strategic consultancies or corporate communications, nor external marketing, for these purposes.

Letter from Gareth Jones, dated 7 December 2010:

I am replying on behalf of Companies House to your Parliamentary Question tabled 9 November 2010, UIN 23769 to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying to you.

Companies House has not spent any money from the public purse on influencing public policy.

Letter from Stephen Speed, dated 11 November 2010:

The Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has asked me to reply to your question how much his Department's agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent from the public purse on influencing public policy through (a) employing external (i) public affairs companies, (ii) strategic consultancies and (iii) corporate communications firms, (b) external marketing and (c) other activities in each year since its inception.

The Insolvency Service Executive Agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has not engaged in any of the activities listed and therefore, the amount spent under each category is nil.

Letter from Geoff Russell, dated 11 November 2010:

I refer to your parliamentary question tabled on 9 November to the Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills requesting to know how much his departments, agencies and non-departmental public bodies have spent from the public purse on influencing public policy through a number of channels.

The Skills Funding Agency (the Agency) is an agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and I confirm that the Agency has not spent any monies from the public purse on influencing public policy since its inception.

Letter from John Alty, dated 13 December 2010:

I am responding in respect of the Intellectual Property Office to your Parliamentary Question tabled 09/11/2010, to the Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO), an operating name of the Patent Office, has spent no money on influencing public policy since its inception.

Exports

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many export orders were won by British businesses as a result of trade missions undertaken since May 2010; what the monetary value was of each such order; and if he will make a statement. [30315]

Mr Prisk: Through its Performance and Impact Monitoring Survey (PIMS), UKTI tracks the value of benefits attributed by British businesses to their participation in UKTI supported trade missions. The benefits are calculated by using independently administered surveys of some 4,000 customers across the full range of UKTI trade services each year. Results are published quarterly on the UKTI website at:

www.ukti.gov.uk

For trade missions undertaken between 1 April 2010 and 30 June 2010 results will be available in January 2011. Over the past two years, PIMS results show mean benefit per business participating in supported outward missions ranging between £101,000 and £285,000, measured as additional profit attributed to business gained as a result of their participation in UKTI supported trade missions[1].

UKTI does not collect data on the value of individual orders won by businesses using its services, as these are a private commercial matter for the companies concerned.

Further Education: Standards

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many further education colleges Ofsted rated as *(a)* outstanding, *(b)* good, *(c)* satisfactory and *(d)* failing in the last 12 months. [30425]

Mr Hayes: This is a matter for Ofsted. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Christine Gilbert, will write to my hon. Friend and a copy of her response will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Further Education: Teachers

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what qualifications are required to teach in a further education college; and if he will make a statement. [30428]

Mr Hayes: All new further education teachers appointed from 1 September 2007 are required to hold or acquire within a specified period of time the following qualifications:

(a) a 'Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector' (PTLLS) award (or its equivalent), which is a minimum threshold licence to teach for all who have an element of teaching in their role, irrespective of job title; and

(b) a Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector at minimum level 5 (or its equivalent) leading to Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status for those in a full teaching role; or

(c) a Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector at level 3 or 4 (or its equivalent), leading to Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) status for those in an associate teaching role, (ie a role that carries significantly less than the full range of teaching responsibilities carried out in a full teaching role).

Higher Education: Finance

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the effect on the economy in the Brighton and Hove area of the planned reduction in teaching funding to the university sector; and if he will make a statement. [30112]

Mr Willetts: Our reforms to higher education will shift the balance of public funds for teaching from direct grant to institutions to funding that follows the choices made by individual students. This will provide strong incentives for institutions to focus on providing high quality teaching as efficiently as possible. Over time, popular and successful institutions will be able to grow and we expect new providers to enter the sector providing they can offer teaching to the high standards students will expect. We do not expect the overall income of the sector to reduce and we expect improved teaching quality and better informed students to have a positive impact on the economy. We do not have the data in order to make an assessment at the local level of the effect of the reforms in any particular area, as that will depend on the decisions taken by each individual institution in response to the new funding regime.

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[1] UK Trade and Investment Performance and Impact Monitoring Survey (PIMS) PIMS 16-19 Report (Part 2) Table C.2.2.

Higher Education: Student Numbers

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many young people from each London borough entered *(a)* university and *(b)* a Russell Group university in the last four years. [30214]

Mr Willetts: The latest available information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is shown in the table. Figures for London boroughs are not available, therefore local authority data has been provided as an alternative. Figures for the 2009/10 academic year will be available in January 2011. Entrants to Higher Education courses at Further Education Colleges are not included.

Young[1] Undergraduate entrants from London local authorities UK higher education institutions Academic years 2005/06 to 2008/09

	Entrants to UK higher education institutions				of which: entrants to Russell Group institutions			
Local Authority	*2005/06*	*2006/07*	*2007/08*	*2008/09*	*2005/06*	*2006/07*	*2007/08*	*2008/09*
City of London	15	30	20	25	5	10	5	10
Camden	1,025	965	1,005	1,120	285	265	255	315
Greenwich	995	1,125	1,225	1,375	130	150	150	180
Hackney	1,105	1,135	1,135	1,295	135	115	125	135
Hammersmith and Fulham	750	725	770	865	220	205	185	245
Islington	870	865	895	950	170	155	205	185
Kensington and Chelsea	710	715	790	750	280	300	290	285
Lambeth	1,335	1,350	1,395	1,585	250	240	245	295
Lewisham	1,310	1,380	1,470	1,670	215	210	205	250
Southwark	1,280	1,280	1,415	1,520	260	215	220	265
Tower Hamlets	1,075	1,105	1,145	1,370	80	75	80	85
Wandsworth	1,225	1,175	1,320	1,355	325	320	405	405
Westminster	880	900	910	975	250	260	270	265
Barking and Dagenham	650	655	755	920	55	50	60	80
Barnet	2,635	2,635	2,710	2,715	900	855	915	880
Bexley	1,060	1,130	1,185	1,300	150	155	190	210
Brent	2,145	2,145	2,175	2,285	425	355	410	410
Bromley	1,785	1,790	1,850	2,000	460	450	445	465
Croydon	2,075	2,115	2,295	2,495	425	390	465	440
Ealing	2,290	2,335	2,255	2,430	435	435	455	475
Enfield	1,955	1,975	1,990	2,205	310	335	335	350
Haringey	1,370	1,360	1,505	1,545	280	265	290	295
Harrow	2,030	2,050	2,240	2,270	545	575	640	610
Havering	1,015	1,010	1,105	1,205	135	135	160	130
Hillingdon	1,475	1,480	1,535	1,690	240	310	280	265
Hounslow	1,455	1,405	1,480	1,590	255	245	255	295
Kingston upon Thames	1,135	1,060	1,085	1,095	295	300	280	310
Merton	1,075	1,060	1,150	1,225	280	245	295	305
Newham	1,790	1,910	1,990	2,175	145	135	140	165
Redbridge	2,055	2,215	2,175	2,395	365	385	395	400
Richmond upon Thames	1,260	1,155	1,295	1,275	460	410	460	460
Sutton	985	1,060	1,090	1,155	220	240	245	255
Waltham Forest	1,330	1,445	1,485	1,555	125	160	140	150
Missing[2]	70	130	35	30	10	0	0	5
Total	44,215	44,865	46,880	50,415	9,100	8,960	9,510	9,865

[1] Covers entrants aged under 21

[2] Covers entrants whose local authority was not established due to missing or invalid postcode information

Note:

Figures are based on a HESA standard registration population and have been rounded to the nearest five

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Insolvency

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps his Department is taking to encourage greater transparency in the insolvency sector. [30158]

Mr Davey: The Office of Fair Trading recently undertook a review into the corporate insolvency market, which was published on 24 June 2010. This included a number of recommendations, in particular related to complaints processes and the structure of regulation of insolvency practitioners. The Government are also considering the responses to a consultation on improving transparency in pre-packaged administrations.

We expect to publish the Government's responses to both the OFT report and the pre-pack consultation shortly.

We have also recently issued a call for evidence in relation to the regime for personal insolvency.

As I stated in a previous answer, changes were recently made to the procedural insolvency rules in England and Wales in April to require insolvency practitioners to provide more information to creditors on the progress of insolvency cases, in particular in relation to remuneration and other expenses incurred. Additionally, creditors have been given new rights to request further information from the office-holder on the remuneration and expenses shown in the progress reports that they are sent.

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how long on average it took for an insolvency case to be settled in the latest period for which figures are available. [30179]

Mr Davey: The Insolvency Service does not record this information and I can add nothing further to the reply I gave on 8 September, *Official Report*, column 525W.

Insolvency: Fees and Charges

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether his Department plans to set a cap on the fees charged by insolvency practitioners. [30156]

Mr Davey: We currently have no plans to introduce legislation to cap the level of fees charged by insolvency practitioners. Power to set such fees rests with the creditors or the court.

The Office of Fair Trading recently undertook a review into the corporate insolvency market, which was published on 24 June 2010. It recommended that the complaints process should be extended to include complaints over fees charged by insolvency practitioners. We expect to publish the Government's response to this report shortly.

Local Enterprise Agencies

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much funding from each source he expects to be available to each proposed local enterprise partnership in each year of the spending review period. [30632]

Mr Prisk: No central Government spending has been allocated specifically to fund the activities of local enterprise partnerships. As set out in the White Paper on local growth, local enterprise partnerships will be expected to fund their own day-to-day running costs and will also want to consider how they can obtain the best value for public money by leveraging in private sector investment. Local enterprise partnerships and proposed partnerships may also wish to submit bids to the Regional Growth Fund or European Funding. It is for local authorities to decide how much of their discretionary spending they allocate to local enterprise partnerships.

Nuclear Power Stations: Construction

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what responsibilities he has in respect of the supply chain for new nuclear facilities in the UK. [30236]

Mr Prisk: This Department, working alongside the Department of Energy and Climate Change, focuses on assisting business in being able to maximise their opportunities in the global and domestic civil nuclear market. Specifically this is supported by:

Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (N-AMRC);

Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS)

SC@nuclear/Nuclear Industry Association (NIA)

Export support through UK Trade and Investment

Engagement with the utility and reactor design companies on industrial opportunities.

Overseas Students

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which 15 countries outside the EU have the highest number of nationals studying in further and higher education institutions in the UK. [30083]

Mr Willetts: The information is as follows:

Table 1 covers UK higher education institutions and shows the latest available information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Domicile has been used as opposed to nationality as this is a more widely used and reliable method of measuring non-EU students.

Table 2 covers English further education colleges and shows further education participation figures by country of domicile for 2008/09, the latest year for which full year data is available. Information on the nationality of learners in further education is not available. For both further education and higher education figures for the 2009/10 academic year will be available in January 2011.

Table 1: 15 Non-EU countries ranked by highest number of enrolments[1], UK higher education institutions. Academic year 2008/09

Non-EU country	*Enrolments*
China	47,035
India	34,065
Nigeria	14,380
United States	14,345
Malaysia	12,695
Pakistan	9,610
Hong Kong	9,600
Canada	5,350
Taiwan	5,235
Saudi Arabia	5,205
Thailand	4,675
South Korea	4,275
Japan	3,870
Sri Lanka	3,555
Bangladesh	3,490

[1] Covers enrolments to all levels and modes of study.

Note

Figures are based on a HESA standard registration population and have been rounded to the nearest five.

Source

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Table 2: 15 Non-EU countries ranked by highest learner responsive participation in further education institutions. Academic year 2008/09

Non-EU country	*Participation*
Pakistan	1,000
Iran	600
Afghanistan	500
Iraq	400
Bangladesh	400
India	400
China	300
Eritrea	300
Somalia	300
Nepal	300
Brazil	200
Thailand	200
Zimbabwe	200
Nigeria	200

Table 2: 15 Non-EU countries ranked by highest learner responsive participation in further education institutions: Academic year 2008/09

Non-EU country	*Participation*
Turkey	200

Notes:
1. Figures include government-funded learners only, funded by the Skills Funding Agency/Young Person's Learning Agency.
2. All figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Figures include Learner Responsive funding stream only.

Source:
Individualised Learner Record

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which 25 universities have the highest number of students from outside the EU. [30163]

Mr Willetts: The latest available information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is shown in the table. Figures for the 2009/10 academic year will be available in January 2011.

25 UK higher education institutions ranked by highest number of non-EU domiciled enrolments[1]: Academic year 2008/09

UK higher education institutions	*Enrolments*
University of Manchester	6,845
University of Nottingham	6,145
University of Warwick	5,005
University of Northumbria at Newcastle	4,875
London School of Economics and Political Science	4,745
University College London	4,740
University of Greenwich	4,635
University of Leeds	4,510
University of Birmingham	4,295
University of Sheffield	4,200
University of Oxford	4,140
University of the Arts, London	3,915
University of Hertfordshire	3,780
University of East London	3,715
Sheffield Hallam University	3,650
University of Bedfordshire	3,555
University of Cambridge	3,535
London Metropolitan University	3,520
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	3,505
The City University	3,485
Cardiff University	3,485
University of Edinburgh	3,390
Middlesex University	3,350
University of Westminster	3,335
University of Sunderland	3,120

[1] Covers enrolments to all levels and modes of study.

Note:
Figures are based on a HESA standard registration population and have been rounded to the nearest five.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many overseas students are studying for *(a)* undergraduate degrees and *(b)* postgraduate degrees in (i) a science subject, (ii) medicine, (iii) dentistry, (iv) nursing, (v) social care, (vi) architecture, (vii) a social science subject, (viii) an arts and humanities subject and (ix) a modern foreign language in England. [30164]

Mr Willetts: The numbers of overseas (non-European Union) students enrolled on undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses at English higher education institutions are shown by subject of study in the table. Figures are provided for the 2008/09 academic year. Information for the 2009/10 academic year will become available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency in January 2011.

Undergraduate and postgraduate overseas student enrolments[1] English higher education institutions: Academic year 2008/09

	Enrolments	
Subject area	*Undergraduate*	*Postgraduate*
Medicine and dentistry	2,440	2,680
Of which:		
Medicine	2,230	2,215
Dentistry	210	340
Subjects allied to medicine	5,815	4,770
Of which:		
Nursing	2,385	440
Biological sciences	3,355	4,155
Veterinary science	115	60
Agriculture and related subjects	405	585
Physical sciences	2,030	3,505
Mathematical sciences	2,710	1,300
Computer science	4,700	10,330
Engineering and technology	14,350	15,460
Architecture, building and planning	2,150	2,465
Of which:		
Architecture	1,235	770
Total science	38,065	45,310
Social studies	8,070	10,085
Of which:		
Social work[2]	360	290
Law	5,800	5,095
Business and administrative studies	25,775	37,945
Mass communications and documentation	1,640	2,090
Languages	5,890	3,660
Of which:		
Modern Foreign Languages[3]	1,510	1,005
Historical and philosophical studies	1,070	2,370
Creative arts and design	6,015	3,720
Education	1,775	5,125
Combined	2,325	70
Total Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts	58,365	70,165
All subjects	96,430	115,470

[1] Covers full-time and part-time overseas students of all ages domiciled outside of the European Union.

[2] Social care is not listed as a principal subject on the HESA student record. Social work is provided as an alternative in the table.

[3] Covers the following principal subjects: French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Scandinavian, Russian and East European and European studies and Other European languages Chinese, Japanese, South Asian, Other Asian, African and Modern Middle Eastern studies and others in Eastern, Asiatic, African, American and Australasian studies.

Note:
Figures are on a HESA standard registration population basis and are rounded to the nearest five, so components may not sum to totals.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record

Science: Females

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what *(a)* measures and *(b)* funding he plans to provide to support women to enter the science, engineering and technology sectors during the spending review period; and if he will make a statement. [30132]

Mr Willetts: Decisions regarding measures and funding to support women to enter the science, engineering and technology sectors will be made as part of the detailed allocations process, following the spending review settlement on 20 October 2010. Announcements regarding these decisions will be made as they emerge.

However, the proposed changes to student funding mean that women taking out time to have a family will not repay their graduate contribution until they are earning £21,000, and are more likely to benefit from any outstanding graduate contribution being written off after 30 years. Additionally, 40% of women will contribute less to the cost of their higher education under our proposals, than under the current system.

During 2010, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), has commissioned nine regional STEM support centres, making best use of existing structures (at a cost of £1.35 million), and has set out a number of priority themes for regional provider-led activity. One of these is Equality and Diversity, and addressing under-representation across STEM. LSIS is also pleased to confirm that a significant proportion of those leading on STEM activity are female.

As a result LSIS has funded a number of projects to support this priority area:

1. Careers guide: LSIS is working with the Centre for Science Education at Sheffield Hallam University to support careers guidance which will impact on the recruitment of women into STEM subjects.

2. During 2010, bursaries of £10,000 have been awarded to three college based projects which focus specifically on issues of under-representation and progression to STEM study in FE.

3. It is LSIS's intention to continue targeting bursaries for this area in 2011, in line with the priorities we have identified for our STEM activity.

In addition, LSIS has commissioned research into the equality agenda and STEM and, in particular, the low take up and progression of under-represented groups, including women, into science, technology and engineering.

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of gender equality in the workforce in the science, engineering and technology sectors; what assessment he has made of the requirement for further action by the Government to achieve such equality; and if he will make a statement. [30133]

Mr Willetts: The Department draws on a wealth of information and expertise on the subject of equality. This includes reports published by the National Academies and learned societies, EngineeringUK and technology institutions, evidence and analysis from the Research Councils, and statistical information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), and many other sources.

This Department's approach to diversity, including gender equality, will be developed as part of the detailed budget allocations process, following the spending review settlement on 20 October 2010. Announcements concerning our approach will be made in the light of the relevant decisions.

Sheffield Forgemasters

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what discussions he has had with Ministerial colleagues on Sheffield Forgemasters since May 2010. [30235]

Mr Prisk: Sheffield Forgemasters was discussed as appropriate with ministerial colleagues prior to the collective Government decision to not proceed with the loan to the company on grounds of affordability.

The withdrawal of the loan is no reflection on the company, the project, its management or staff or of our commitment to taking forward the facilitative actions to remove unnecessary barriers to new nuclear in the UK. In these difficult times, tough decisions have had to be made across Government. This was just such a decision.

Skylon Spaceplane

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent assessment he has made of the potential viability of the Skylon Spaceplane; what assessment he has made of his merits of Government support for that project; and if he will make a statement. [30890]

Mr Willetts: The European Space Agency is funding proof of concept work for Skylon from UK contributions. This work is focusing on demonstrating the viability of the advanced British engine technology that would underpin the project. Initial work will be completed in mid 2011 and if the trial is successful, we will work with industry to consider next steps.

Students: Fees and Charges

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what plans he has to monitor the impact of higher undergraduate fees on take up of postgraduate provision; and if he will make a statement. [30186]

Mr Willetts: The Government will monitor participation in postgraduate study to identify whether changes to the undergraduate funding and finance system have any effect on entry to postgraduate courses.

The Government are committed to Britain being a world leading place to do research. The science and research budget will be maintained in cash terms over the spending review period with resource spending of £4.6 billion a year by 2014/15. We will ring-fence that budget to ensure continuity of investment in science and research.

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the impact of higher fees at undergraduate level on take up of postgraduate study. [30187]

Mr Willetts: Lord Browne did not recommend any changes to the funding of postgraduate education but did recommend that participation in postgraduate study should be monitored to identify whether changes to the undergraduate funding and finance system have any effect on entry to postgraduate courses. We have committed to do so.

Thomas Docherty: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what estimate he has made of the Barnett consequentials for Scotland arising from the proposed change in the level of tuition fees in 2012-13; [30534]

(2) whether any Barnett consequentials will arise for Scotland as a result of implementation of proposed changes to arrangements for tuition fees. [30540]

Mr Willetts: Adjustments in the block grant totals for the Devolved Administrations through the "Barnett formula" are calculated on the basis of the overall change in departmental expenditure limits rather than any particular programmes within them. We have consistently indicated that each Devolved Administration will need to make its own decisions about how to fund higher education and the other services for which it is responsible within the overall total available to it.

Students: Loans

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the debt owed to the Student Loan Company by residents of the London borough of Bexley who are in higher education in the academic year 2010-11. [30426]

Mr Willetts: The Department does not have estimates of student loan debt at local authority level for academic year 2010/11. Information cannot be provided for academic year 2010/11 as the application cycle for student support is ongoing. Students can apply for support up to nine months after the start of the academic year. Figures on the student loan debt position at the end of financial year 2010-11 are expected to be published at national level in June 2011. Information on loans paid during the academic year 2010/11 are expected to be published in November 2011 at national level.

Technology Strategy Board

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what plans he has for the future work of the Technology Strategy Board; and if he will make a statement. [30357]

Mr Willetts: As set out in this Department's recently published Blueprint for Technology and the Growth Review, the Government are making the Technology Strategy Board the prime channel through which the Government will incentivise business-led technology innovation and are providing it with over £200 million to establish a network of technology and innovation centres to help commercialise new and emerging technologies.

Trade: Developing Countries

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent steps he has taken to encourage trade links with developing countries, and if he will make a statement. [30316]

Mr Prisk: Ministers are actively engaging with overseas Governments in these countries to develop better trade links. The Prime Minster's trade-focused visits to India and China, on which I went in support, and my own trips to Russia and Brazil are prime examples of this.

UK Trade and Investment is targeting 17 key high growth markets—Brazil, China (including Hong Kong), India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, UAE and Vietnam—based on their potential for growth and other criteria such as their market match and scope for UKTI help. UKTI is responding to this demand for help to secure new business by: ensuring there are targeted services and advice available for businesses considering these markets; raising greater awareness among UK business of these such as through the 'Doing Business in Asia' events around the UK (November 2010, February 2011) this autumn and winter, and 'Partner Middle East'; communicating to business the specific opportunities in them; and campaigning for better access for UK companies.

The UK Government are actively supporting efforts to sign EU free trade agreements with India, Mercosur (Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay) and ASEAN (current bilateral negotiations are taking place with Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam) as well as seeking a successful conclusion to the WTO's Doha development round, all of which would bring significant benefits to developing countries.

Unemployment: Brighton and Hove

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people in Brighton, Kemptown constituency were not in employment, education or training in each month of the last five years for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [30488]

Mr Hayes: The following table provides estimates of the number and proportion of people aged[1] 16 to 24 not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Brighton and Hove local authority in each year from 2005 to 2009.

People aged 16 to 24-years-old not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Brighton and Hove local authority

	Number NEET	95 Confidence Interval	Percentage of all 16 to 24-year-olds NEET	95 Confidence Interval
2005	3,000	+/-1,000	12	+/-5pp
2006	4,000	+/-2,000	11	+/-5pp
2007	5,000	+/-2,000	13	+/-5pp
2008	5,000	+/-2,000	12	+/-4pp
2009	6,000	+/-2,000	17	+/-5pp

This information is from the Annual Population Survey, which covers the period January to December of each year, with 2009 being the most recent estimate available. The Annual Population Survey is the only available source of data with a sample large enough to provide local authority estimates of the number of young people up to the age of 24 who are NEET. However, the sample is not large enough to provide estimates for smaller geographies, such as parliamentary constituencies.

It is important to note that these estimates are subject to large sampling variability and should therefore be treated with caution and viewed in conjunction with their Confidence Intervals, which indicate how accurate an estimate is. For example, a Confidence Interval of +/- 5 percentage points (pp) means that the true value is between 5pp above the estimate and 5pp below the estimate.

[1] Age used is academic age, which is defined as the respondents age as at the preceding 31 August.

Vocational Guidance

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps he plans to take in designing his Department's new careers service to provide expert levels of service to those of all ages; what *(a)* funding and *(b)* resources he plans to allocate to adults using the service; and what steps he plans to take to ensure that (i) graduates who have been made redundant and (ii) qualified returners to the labour market can use this service. [30206]

Mr Hayes: The all-age careers service is being developed jointly by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Department for Education (DFE). To ensure expert levels of service to young people and adults, both Departments are working with the Careers Profession Alliance to take forward recommendations made by the Careers Profession Task Force in October 2010, and so raise the professional standards of careers guidance practitioners. To draw on the views, knowledge and experience of the careers sector, a Stakeholder Advisory Group has been established to inform the design of the new service. The Departments will also work with schools and local authorities as the service is established.

Following the spending review, BIS and DFE are working through the detail of their spending settlements and are unable at this stage to confirm the funding and resources that will be available for the all-age service.

The all-age careers service will be accessible online, by telephone and in the community. Careers advice and resources will be available to help redundant graduates and qualified returners to the labour market. Intensive face to face careers guidance will be prioritised for those with the greatest need, and the details of this model are being worked through.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Claimants: Complaints

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent complaints he has received on the central call system for individual benefit claimants; and whether he plans to enable claimants to telephone their local offices. [30885]

Chris Grayling: The Department for Work and Pensions welcomes all customer feedback as a way to improve the quality of the services we provide. Recent feedback and/or complaints received regarding the centralisation of our telephony services has included reference to the accessibility of our services and the cost of contacting us via 0845 telephone numbers. We constantly review our service delivery to ensure we deliver the best possible service for our customers.

The movement of local Jobcentre Plus offices to a national switchboard service is the latest stage in our telephony strategy to provide single national numbers to access our services. However, direct dial calls to a customer's personal adviser in their local Jobcentre Plus office are not affected by these changes and are still encouraged.

Child Benefit

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of parents who will cease to claim child benefit because a member of their household is a higher rate tax payer; and what mechanism he plans to put in place to ensure that parents who do not claim child benefit will continue to receive credits to satisfy the conditions for long-term benefits, including the state pension. [29350]

Steve Webb: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave on 17 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 827W, to the hon. Member for Bolton West (Julie Hilling).

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the expenditure of his Department and its predecessor on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28370]

Chris Grayling: This information is not held centrally by the Department and could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Disposable Income: Pay

Mr Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the level of median *(a)* pay and *(b)* real personal disposable income has been in each year since 1990. [30092]

Chris Grayling: The Office for National Statistics carries out the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) each April. This is the most comprehensive source of employee earnings information in the United Kingdom. Levels of earnings are estimated from ASHE and are provided for employees on adult rates of pay, whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence.

The ASHE was developed to replace the New Earnings Survey (NES) in 2004. This included improvements to the coverage of employees, imputation for item non-response and the weighting of earnings estimates. An ASHE backseries for 1997 to 2003 was compiled using the ASHE methodology applied to the NES data sets. Earnings estimates for 1990 to 1996 are taken from the NES data, which was a GB survey.

Table 1: Median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees in GB for April of each year from 1990 until 1996 and for full-time employees in the UK for April of each year from 1997 to 2010

	Median gross weekly earnings (£)
1990 (GB)	229.4
1991 (GB)	246.9
1992 (GB)	264.6
1993 (GB)	273.3
1994 (GB)	281.9
1995 (GB)	290.3
1996 (GB)	301.1
1997 (UK)	320.5
1998 (UK)	334.9
1999 (UK)	345.5
2000 (UK)	359.0
2001 (UK)	375.9
2002 (UK)	390.9
2003 (UK)	404.0
2004[1] (UK)	422.8
2004[2] (UK)	419.2
2005 (UK)	431.2
2006[3] (UK)	446.4
2006[4] (UK)	443.6
2007 (UK)	457.6
2008 (UK)	479.1
2009 (UK)	488.5
2010 (UK)	498.8

[1] 2004 results excluding supplementary survey for comparison with 2003.
[2] 2004 results including supplementary survey designed to improve coverage of the survey.
[3] 2006 results with methodology consistent with 2005.
[4] 2006 results with methodology consistent with 2007.
[5] Figures have not been adjusted for inflation and have been rounded to the nearest 10 pence.

Note:

Full-time employees on adult rates of pay, whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence.

Source:

ASHE Data 1997 to 2010/NES Data 1990 to 1996

Estimates of equivalised household disposable incomes are available in the households below average income (HBAI) series. This uses disposable household income, adjusted using modified OECD equivalisation factors for household size and composition, as an income measure as a proxy for standard of living. These data are at a household not individual level.

Table 2: Median equivalised household income 1990-91 to 2008-09, in 2008-09 prices, £ per week

	Before housing costs	After housing costs
1990-91 (UK)	319	253
1991-92 (UK)	321	255
1992-93 (UK)	322	256
1993-95 (UK)	327	261
1994-95 (GB)	322	254
1995-96 (GB)	322	255
1996-97 (GB)	336	268
1997-98 (GB)	342	273
1998-99 (GB)	348	279
1999-2000 (GB)	358	291
2000-01 (GB)	369	302
2001-02 (GB)	388	319
2002-03 (UK)	395	330
2004-05 (UK)	398	337
2005-06 (UK)	402	342
2006-07 (UK)	404	344
2007-08 (UK)	404	346
2008-09 (UK)	407	343

Notes:

1. FES figures are for the United Kingdom. FRS figures are for Great Britain up to 2001-02, and for the United Kingdom from 2002-03. The reference period for FRS figures is single financial years. FES figures are two combined calendar years from 1990-91-1992-93 and two financial years combined for 1993-95.
2. All estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to uncertainty. Small differences should be treated with caution as these will be affected by sampling error and variability in non-response.
3. Figures have been presented on a before housing cost and an after housing cost basis. For before housing costs, housing costs (such as rent, water rates, mortgage interest payments, buildings insurance payments and ground rent and service charges) are not deducted from income, while for after housing costs they are.
4. Disposable incomes have been used to answer the question. This includes earnings from employment and self-employment, state support, income from occupational and private pensions, investment income and other sources. Income tax, payments, national insurance contributions, council tax/domestic rates and some other payments are deducted from incomes.
5. Incomes are presented in 2008-09 prices and have been rounded to the nearest pound sterling.

Source:

Family Expenditure Survey (FES) 1990-91 to 1993-95/Family Resources Survey (FRS), 1994-95 to 2008-09

Future Jobs Fund

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* each bid for funding from the Future Jobs Fund made to his Department and rejected as a consequence of the decision to discontinue the fund and *(b)* his Department's correspondence with each such bidder. [29020]

Chris Grayling: The Department has not placed the requested bid documents in the Library as they could be provided only at a disproportionate cost. We are able to provide details of bids that were rejected as a consequence of the decision to discontinue the fund, the number of jobs included in these bids and the proposed maximum value. The Department has placed the table with this information in the Library.

Also included is the correspondence which was sent to all organisations which had submitted a bid to the Future Jobs Fund after the 29 January. After that date such bids would not have completed the assessment process and the results would not have been announced before the general election in May 2010. Further individual correspondence is not collated centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost to the Department.

Housing Benefit

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of local rental markets he expects to be affordable to recipients of local housing allowance in 2014-15. [25931]

Steve Webb: The information is not available. The proportion of local rents affordable to local housing allowance recipients in 2014-15 will depend on movements in local rental markets between now and then and the detailed design of the measure to link local housing allowance rates to the consumer price index from April 2013.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Aberdeen South of 22 November

2010, *Official Report*, columns 18-19, on housing benefit, if he will place in the Library a copy of the international evidence cited. [29104]

Steve Webb: The international evidence referred to by the Secretary of State was work by Bargain and Doorley (2009) and work on Britain by Meghir and Phillips (2008). I have arranged for copies of these papers to be placed in the Library.

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance in (i) South Lanarkshire and (ii) Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency share their tenancy with a non-dependant for which a deduction is made from their entitlement. [29369]

Sheila Gilmore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance in Edinburgh East constituency share their tenancy with a non-dependant in respect of whom a deduction is made from their entitlement. [29537]

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency share their tenancy with a non-dependent person for whom a deduction is made from their entitlement. [30118]

Steve Webb: The information requested is not available at the local level.

The Department does collect information on non-dependant deductions but to assess the completeness of recording and quality assure the figures would incur a disproportionate cost.

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the average amount of housing benefit paid was for each tenure type in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency in the latest period for which figures are available; [29363]

(2) what the average amount of local housing allowance paid was for each tenure type in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency in the latest period for which figures are available; [29364]

(3) how many people in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency receive local housing allowance. [29366]

Steve Webb: The information is not available at the constituency level.

At present geographic breakdowns are only available for local authorities and regions. However, an exercise is being undertaken to add other geographical areas to the data; this will include parliamentary constituencies.

At August 2010, our records show that in South Lanarkshire there were 3,570 recipients of housing benefit assessed under the local housing allowance arrangements. The average housing benefit award for each available tenure type is shown in the table.

Average housing benefit awards in South Lanarkshire by tenure type, August 2010

Tenure type	*Average housing benefit (£ per week)*
Local authority tenant	53.80
Registered social landlord tenant	67.26
Private regulated tenant	76.19
Private deregulated tenant (LHA)	92.88
Private deregulated tenant (non-LHA)	81.80
All tenures	62.29

Members: Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he plans to respond to the letter of 28 October 2010 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms H Gourlay. [30594]

Chris Grayling: Following a thorough search of the Department's correspondence system, we are unable to locate this letter.

Remploy: Manpower

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people Remploy has employed at management level in each year since 2000. [30891]

Maria Miller: The available information is detailed in the following table:

Total employed at management level

	Number
1999-2000	308
2000-01	313
2001-02	347
2002-03	370
2003-04	424
2004-05	455
2005-06	450
2006-07	449
2007-08	498
2008-09	466
2009-10	524

Note:
These figures cover anyone in the management structure from 'M1' grade (first rung of the management ladder) up to 'X' grade (senior managers and executive grades).
Source:
Remploy

Social Security Benefits: Overpayments

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what information his Department holds on the proportion of over-payments to benefit recipients in Blackpool North and Cleveleys constituency which were *(a)* due to customer error, *(b)* due to departmental error and *(c)* recovered from customers. [29388]

Steve Webb: The information is not available as data on recorded benefit debt are not broken down by geographical area.

Universal Credit

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions at what point during a payment period universal credit will be paid to employees who are paid monthly. [27977]

Chris Grayling: No decisions have yet been made on the timing and frequency of payments of universal credit, though we are considering whether payment should be made monthly to align with the most common payment pattern for earnings.

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to make the real-time earnings data provided for calculation of universal credit available to local authorities. [28169]

Chris Grayling: The administration of universal credit will be managed by the Department for Work and Pensions. We are working closely with local authorities and the devolved Administrations on the implications for them of the introduction of universal credit, but we do not currently expect that local authorities will need to have access to real-time earnings data.

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what mechanism he plans to put in place to enable people without online access to *(a)* apply for universal credit and *(b)* access their universal credit accounts. [28206]

Chris Grayling: Claims to universal credit will normally be made online, and we will work with partners across and outside Government to ensure that people are able to take advantage of the online service. Where that is not possible, we will offer alternative access routes, predominantly by phone but also face to face where necessary.

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether an employee's universal credit will be paid *(a)* late or *(b)* on time but on the basis of previous data in a case where real-time earnings data from an employer are delayed. [28211]

Chris Grayling: Employers will be expected to provide earnings data at the same time as making payments of earnings to their employees. If this does not occur we will put arrangements in place to ensure that payments to universal credit recipients are not delayed.

Winter Fuel Payments: Reading West

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claims for winter fuel payments his Department received from households in *(a)* Reading West constituency, *(b)* Reading borough and *(c)* West Berkshire in the most recent 12 months for which figures are available. [29993]

Steve Webb: Most winter fuel payments are paid automatically without the need to claim them.

The latest available information on the number of households receiving winter fuel payments in Reading West constituency, Reading borough and West Berkshire is in the documents winter fuel payment (number of households) 2009-10 by parliamentary constituency (2005) and winter fuel payment (number of households) 2009-10 by local authority and gender. These are available in the House of Commons Library and on the internet at:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=wfp

Winter Fuel Payments: Taxation

Mr Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the revenue cost of exempting the winter fuel payment from taxation was in the latest period for which figures are available. [30038]

Steve Webb: By the end of 2010-11, we estimate that around £290 million would have been paid in income tax on winter fuel payments in that year had they not been exempt from taxation.

Notes:

1. A winter fuel payment of £250 per household containing someone who has reached women's state pension age is modelled. Where the household contains someone aged 80 or over, this payment is increased to £400.

2. Figures use HMRC data on the number of taxpayers by tax band for 2007-08, projected forwards using June 2010 Budget assumptions. It is assumed that all taxpayers of appropriate age get a winter fuel payment.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Biodiversity

Thomas Docherty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has had recent discussions with the Secretary of State for International Development on the role of her Department in supporting protection of biodiversity overseas through the projects it delivers. [30344]

Richard Benyon *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: Ministers have discussed the outcomes of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya and how to take them forward, particularly on biodiversity, development and climate mitigation and adaptation, and in the context of wider international engagement.

My colleagues at the Department for International Development are committed to integrating environment and climate change into development, including environment and climate proofing our official development assistance spending.

Common Land

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what powers local authorities have to designate land within their ownership and for the use of the public as town or village greens. [29843]

Richard Benyon: Landowners, including local authorities, can apply under section 15(8) of the Commons Act 2006 to register their land as a town or village green, a procedure known as "voluntary dedication". Guidance on the voluntary dedication of land as a green has been published on the DEFRA website at:

www.defra.gov.uk/rural/protected/commonland/guidance.htm#4

CABINET OFFICE

Business: Closures

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many businesses have ceased trading in each local authority area in England in each of the last three years. [30384]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning how many businesses have ceased trading in each local authority area in England in each of the last three years. [30384]

Annual statistics on the number of enterprise births and survivals are available from the ONS release on Business Demography at www.statistics.gov.uk. The tables contain the latest statistics available, which show enterprise deaths at county and county district level between 2007 and 2009. Please note that data for 2009 is provided in a separate table, as it includes totals for the seven new Unitary Authorities introduced in April 2009. A copy has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many businesses in rural areas have ceased trading in each region in each of the last three years. [30385]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning how many businesses in rural areas have ceased trading in each region in each of the last three years. [30385]

Annual statistics on the number of enterprise births and survivals are available from the ONS release on Business Demography at

www.statistics.gov.uk

However, information on urban and rural areas is only available for 2009. The following table contains the latest statistics available, which show enterprise deaths in rural areas by Government Office Region for 2009.

Number of enterprise deaths for 2009 in rural areas

	Number
North-east	1,705
North-west	4,565
Yorkshire and The Humber	4,800
East midlands	6,620
West midlands	4,915
East of England	9,545
London	195
South-east	12,115
South-west	8,585
Wales	4,155
Scotland	5,575
Northern Ireland	2,710
UK	65,395

Note:
Rural areas are defined as output areas and wards where the bulk of their population falls in a settlement of less than 10,000 residents

Iraq Committee of Inquiry: Public Appointments

Mr Llwyd: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether the appointment of Margaret Aldred to the secretariat of the Iraq Inquiry was made under his Department's managed move procedures. [30902]

Mr Maude: I refer the hon. Member to the answer the Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office, my hon. Friend the Member for Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner (Mr Hurd) gave on 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 882-83W.

Unemployment: Rural Areas

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the level of unemployment was in rural areas in each region in each of the last 10 quarters. [30386]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking what the level of unemployment was in rural areas in each region in each of the last 10 quarters. (30386)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles unemployment statistics for local areas from the Annual Population Survey (APS) following International Labour Organisation (ILO) definitions.

Table 1 shows the number unemployed people in rural areas in each region from the APS for the latest 10 periods to the 12 months ending March 2010, which is the latest period for which data is available. Estimates from the APS are not available for Northern Ireland.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the APS and Annual LFS are subject to a margin of uncertainty. A guide to the quality of the estimates is given in table 1.

National and local area estimates for many labour market statistics, including employment, unemployment and claimant count are available on the NOMIS website at

http://www.nomisweb.co.uk

Table 1. Number of people unemployed in rural areas[1] in English regions, Wales and Scotland

Thousand

	12 month period ending									
	2007	*2008*				*2009*				*2010*
	Dec	*Mar*	*June*	*Sept*	*Dec*	*Mar*	*June*	*Sept*	*Dec*	*March*
North-east	11	11	11	13	14	16	17	16	17	***17
North-west	12	12	13	12	12	16	18	21	24	**25
Yorkshire and The Humber	22	19	19	17	17	19	23	23	25	**28
East midlands	23	21	21	20	21	28	31	35	34	***36
West midlands	16	16	14	16	16	19	23	24	25	***22
East	30	31	29	33	38	40	40	42	43	**42
London										

Table 1: Number of people unemployed in rural areas[1] in English regions, Wales and Scotland

Thousand

	12 month period ending									
	2007	*2008*				*2009*				*2010*[2]
	Dec	*Mar*	*June*	*Sept*	*Dec*	*Mar*	*June*	*Sept*	*Dec*	*March*
South-east	29	30	28	29	32	35	40	46	48	**51
South-west	29	29	26	25	29	32	39	43	45	**50
Wales	22	22	23	25	26	27	31	30	33	**32
Scotland	31	32	31	31	36	35	40	47	42	**46
Northern Ireland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

'—' = Not available

[1] There is currently no UK-wide standard classification of Urban and Rural land. There are, however, agreed standards for each of the separate administrations. See the following links for details on the classifications and their methodologies:

England and Wales:

www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/nrudp.asp

Scotland:

www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/rural/seurc-00.asp

Northern Ireland:

www.nisra.gov.uk/geography/default.asp10.htm

[2] Coefficients of Variation have been calculated for the latest period as an indication of the quality of the estimates. See Guide to Quality below.

Guide to Quality

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of an estimate, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality. The true value is likely to be within +/- twice the CV—for example, for an estimate of 200 with a CV of 5% we would expect the population total to be within the range 180-220.

Key:

* 0 = CV<5%—Statistical Robustness: Estimates are considered precise

** 5 = CV <10%—Statistical Robustness: Estimates are considered reasonably precise

*** 10 = CV <20%—Statistical Robustness: Estimates are considered acceptable

**** CV ? 20%—Statistical Robustness: Estimates are considered too unreliable for practical purposes

CV = Coefficient of Variation

Source:

Annual Population Survey

TREASURY

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28855]

Danny Alexander: The Treasury spent £5,795 in 2008-09 and £5,834 in 2009-10 on business mileage claims for staff using their own vehicles. Private vehicles are only used on official business where there is a benefit to the Department and it represents the most cost effective means of transport.

Economic Policy: EU Action

Mr Cash: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer what legal advice he has *(a)* sought and *(b)* received on the compatibility of the European Financial Stability Mechanism with provisions of the Treaties (i) prior to and (ii) subsequent to agreement to Council Regulation No. 407/2010; and if he will make a statement. [30900]

Mr Hoban: The European Financial Stability Mechanism (EFSM) was created following agreement by a qualified majority of member states at the ECOFIN meeting on 9 May 2010. The terms of the EFSM are set out in EU Council Regulation No. 407/2010 and it is compatible with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Treasury Ministers received advice on this issue, including legal advice, as part of the process of policy development.

Employment

Julie Elliott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the change in the number of *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector jobs in Sunderland Central constituency and in England in the period up to 2015. [30367]

Danny Alexander: The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) was formed in May 2010 to make an independent assessment of the public finances and the economy.

On 29 November 2010, the OBR released the official forecast for total employment and general Government employment, updated for the spending review announcements.

As the OBR sets out in paragraph 3.98, page 62 of its "November 2010 Economic and fiscal outlook" (Cm 7979), it expects total employment to rise by 1.1 million over the next five years, from 29.0 million in 2010 to 30.1 million in 2015. General Government employment is projected to fall by just over 400,000 between 2010-11 and 2015-16, more than offset by a rise in market sector employment of around 1.5 million.

The OBR has not published forecasts on a sub-national level.

EU Grants and Loans: Republic of Ireland

Mr Cash: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 977W, on EU grants and loans: Republic of Ireland, what assessment he made of the legal advice available to him in determining that he had full confidence in the *(a)* adherence to and *(b)* compliance with the terms set out in article 3 of Council Regulation No. 407/2010 by each relevant EU institution. [30901]

Mr Hoban: The European Financial Stability Mechanism (EFSM) was created following agreement by a qualified majority of member states at the ECOFIN meeting on 9 May 2010. The terms of the EFSM are set out in EU

Council Regulation No. 407/2010. Treasury Ministers received advice on this issue, including legal advice, as part of the process of policy development.

Football: World Cup

Graham Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department spent on entertainment activities related to the 2010 FIFA World Cup. [27362]

Danny Alexander: No entertainment spending related to the 2010 FIFA World Cup was incurred by the Treasury.

Members: Correspondence

Mr Baron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he plans to respond to the letters of 5 and 15 October 2010 from the hon. Member for Basildon and Billericay on his constituent Mr Kerwin. [27276]

Justine Greening *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* I have replied to the hon. Member.

Public Expenditure

Simon Kirby: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to ensure that the Government's expenditure proposals do not disproportionately affect people on low incomes. [19087]

Justine Greening: The Spending Review Framework (Cm 7872) clearly stated that public spending decisions would be made in line with the Government's values of freedom, fairness and responsibility. The Government's approach to public spending ensures that expenditure is focused on protecting the quality of the key front-line services that are important to the public and provide support to those who need it most.

To ensure that the choices made in tackling the deficit are fair, the Government have for the first time undertaken and published a distributional analysis of the impacts of the Spending Review (see Annex B in the 'Spending Review 2010' document). This shows that after combining the impact of tax, benefits and public service spending changes, the highest quintile of earners will make the greatest contribution towards reducing the deficit as a percentage of their income and benefits in kind.

The Government have ensured fairness by:

investing £7 billion in 15 hours of free childcare for disadvantaged two-year-olds; a pupil premium for those at school, and help to get to university;

increases in the child tax credit, worth £180 above indexation in 2011-12 and £160 above indexation in 2012-13;

creating a triple guarantee to uprate the basic state pension by earnings, prices or 2.5%, whichever is highest;

increasing the standard minimum income guarantee in the pension credit by the cash rise in a full basic state pension in April 2011;

preserving key benefits for older people, including winter fuel payments, free eye tests, free prescriptions, concessionary bus travel, and free television licences; and

permanently increasing the award for cold weather payments to £25.

Students: Fees and Charges

Mr Brine: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent estimate he has made of the average annual cost to the Exchequer of ending university tuition fees for all domestic full and part-time higher education students. [30011]

Danny Alexander: Lord Browne's independent review of higher education funding and student finance, which was published in October this year, before the spending review, estimated the cost of replacing tuition fees at around £3 billion a year.

Taxation: Self-assessment

John Howell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax return forms were issued to *(a)* women and *(b)* men in 2009-10. [30388]

Mr Gauke *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* It is estimated that 6.3 million men and 3.1 million women were issued with Self Assessment Returns for the 2008-09 tax year during 2009-10.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

House of Lords: Reform

Gavin Shuker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to bring forward proposals for reform of the House of Lords. [29949]

Mr Harper: A cross-party Committee, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, will come forward with proposals for a wholly or mainly elected second chamber.

The Government will publish a draft Bill early next year. The Bill will then be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny. The Government hopes that this will be carried out by a joint Committee of both Houses.

House of Commons: Members

Gavin Shuker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what factors he took into account when developing his proposals to reduce the number of hon. Members to 600. [29946]

Mr Harper: Ultimately it is a matter of judgment as to the most suitable size of the House, and Ministers decided that a modest reduction to 600 seats would be appropriate, mindful that hon. Members must be able to serve their constituents and that the House must be of sufficient size to be able to carry out its functions effectively. Under the Government's proposals, the 1 December 2009 register suggests the electoral quota for the UK would be around 76,000. More than a third of the existing constituencies are already within 5% either side of 76,000, so the impact of our proposals will see constituencies of a size well within existing norms.

Parliament

Gavin Shuker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what factors he took into account when deciding upon five years as his proposed period for a fixed-term Parliament. [29950]

Mr Harper: Current legislation provides for Parliaments of up to five years. A period of five years provides the right amount of time to allow for strong and stable Government while still ensuring that Parliament and Government remain accountable to the electorate.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan: Peacekeeping Operations

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to meet his Albanian counterpart to discuss *(a)* the Albanian contribution to the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan and *(b)* other bilateral defence issues. [29936]

Dr Fox: I have no current plans to meet with the Albanian Defence Minister. However, I do recognise the important contribution Albania makes to the NATO led mission in Afghanistan.

Aircraft Carriers

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the likely effect on the economy of his decision to build two aircraft carriers. [30607]

Peter Luff: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 648, to the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne North (Catherine McKinnell).

Armed Forces: Anti-Semitism

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the level of anti-Semitism in the armed forces; and if he will make a statement. [29789]

Mr Robathan: While no such specific assessment has been made, any prejudicial behaviour would come to light through the services' normal disciplinary procedures and no problem with anti-Semitism has come to light. A Rabbi to the armed forces has now been appointed and he confirms that there have been no instances where personnel have approached him regarding anti-Semitism.

Armed Forces: Housing

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on changes to housing needs attributable to relocation to the UK of members of the armed forces and their families stationed in Germany. [30105]

Mr Robathan: Ministry of Defence officials are working closely with those in other Government Departments, including the Department for Communities and Local Government, as we address the estates and basing issues arising from the strategic defence and security review. This engagement covers many issues, including housing, and will continue as we develop our plans.

Armed Forces: Mental Health Services

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contingency plans are in place should a catastrophic event prevent the Queen Elizabeth hospital in Birmingham from providing medical care for injured servicemen and women. [29999]

Mr Robathan: In the event of a catastrophic event at the new Queen Elizabeth hospital, military patients would be assigned to other NHS hospitals on the basis of clinical need and bed availability, based on advice from the Department of Health and NHS (including the University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust) at the time.

Armed Forces: Pensions

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he plans to take in response to the order of the chairman of the War Pensions Tribunal to disclose confidential documents relating to UK atomic tests. [28660]

Mr Robathan: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 746W, to the hon. Member for Dunfermline and West Fife (Thomas Docherty).

Armed Forces: Young People

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the compatibility of the six-year agreement entered into by 16 year-olds on joining the armed forces with the UK's obligations under the *(a)* European Convention on Human Rights, *(b)* International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, *(c)* Convention on the Rights of the Child and *(d)* Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. [29345]

Mr Robathan: All due consideration has been given to domestic and international legal obligations in developing the relevant armed forces legislation and policies concerning members of the armed forces who are under 18 years of age.

Clyde Naval Base

Mr Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what published information he has made available to local organisations and individuals about his estimates of the *(a)* trend in the number of service personnel based at HM Naval Base Clyde and *(b)* the projected number of (i) single living accommodation bed spaces and (ii) service family accommodation properties to be built between now and 2021. [26317]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 25 November 2010]*: On 6 May 2009, as part of an announcement regarding the Maritime Change Programme, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) confirmed that HM Naval Base Clyde will become the main operating base for all classes of submarines, including the future classes of submarines, such as the replacement for the Vanguard Class, *Official Report*, column 17WS. Since then, the MOD has and continues to work closely with the local authorities in the Clyde area to assess the potential impact of this decision. This has included releasing preliminary information, which includes initial estimates of the potential numbers of personnel likely to move to the naval base and their potential accommodation requirements. The information released was for future planning purposes only and does not reflect what might be the final position.

In view of his interest in this matter, I will write to the hon. Member to provide him with a copy of the data released to Clyde local authorities along with an explanation of how these forecasts have been calculated.

Substantive answer from Andrew Robathan to Alan Reid:

In my recent response to your Parliamentary Question regarding the trend in the number of service personnel that will be based at Her Majesty's Naval Base (HMNB) Clyde and their potential accommodation requirements (Official Report dated 30 Nov 2010; column 745W), I undertook to write to provide a copy of the data that was released to local authorities in the Clyde area. Please find enclosed a copy of the presentation used to brief local authorities in the Clyde area. This has been presented to council members and local government officers for Argyle and Bute Council (22 September 2010), local Helensburgh and Lomond Councillors (5 October 2010) and the Helensburgh and Lomond Community Council (28 October 2010). It is also intended to present the same information to Shandon and Rhu Community Council on 8 December 2010.

First, I would like to explain that this data has been used by the Department for internal planning purposes and to assist local authorities in the Clyde area to review their arrangements in light of the potential future infrastructure and support needs of HMNB Clyde. The data used in the attached presentation was produced before the outcomes of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) were published and is based on a number of assumptions, elements of which may be subject to change. It has, therefore, always been presented with the caveat that the data should not be considered to represent the final position of the Department. Work remains ongoing within the Department to implement the outcomes of the SDSR and HMNB Clyde will continue to update their forecasts as this work progresses.

Turning now to specific slides within the presentation, I would like to draw your attention to slide 13, which forecasts a potential increase in the number of service personnel, between now and 2022, from 3,200 to 5,300. This forecast was based on the Royal Navy's existing staffing levels required to support the Fleet and was produced before the publication of the SDSR, which as you will be aware, confirmed the requirement for future manpower changes within the Ministry of Defence (MOD). The forecast therefore, does not take into account any future reduction in the numbers of service personnel. I can confirm that work is ongoing to assess the impact of the SDSR on HMNB Clyde, and this is being conducted alongside that already underway to assess how best to implement the Department's aim of making HMNB Clyde the main operating base for all classes of submarines, including the future classes of submarines such as the replacement for the Vanguard Class.

Slide 14 of the presentation includes a projection that the number of all personnel to be based at HMNB Clyde would rise to 9,500. This figure includes the 5,300 figure discussed above and projects that the number of non-service personnel, including MOD civilians, the Commercial Partner (Babcock Marine and Technology Divisions) and other contractors, will increase from 3,000 to 4,200. When presenting the 4,200 figure to the local authorities, the Department made it clear that there are substantial margins of uncertainty in relation to this forecast. For example, the forecast was calculated assuming a direct correlation between workload and workforce and does not take into account any potential efficiencies such as economies of scale. In addition, the estimate does not account for the reduction in the Department's civilian workforce, confirmed in the SDSR, nor does it include any assessment of work ongoing within the Department to develop a procurement strategy that will replace the existing Warship Support Modernisation Initiative, which will deliver future elements of Base and Royal Naval Fleet support to at all three Naval Bases, including HMNB Clyde, from 2013.

Turning to slide 17, which contains an estimate that the number of Single Living Accommodation (SLA) spaces may increase from 2,250 to 3,250 and that the number of Service Family Accommodation (SFA) spaces may increase from 515 to 685. As the slide highlights, predicting the future accommodation requirements is a complex area, and I would like to make it clear that these forecasts are about potential space requirements and do not necessarily indicate that the Department will need to build new accommodation to meet such a forecast. For example, it is possible that some of this requirement could be met by better utilisation of existing capacity, including through refurbishment, and work continues within the Department to assess how best to deliver the future SLA and SFA requirement. I can, however, confirm that informal discussions on how we might meet our potential future SLA requirement for HMNB Clyde have recently taken place with the Argyll and Bute Council, but more work is required before the Department can place any formal plans before the Argyll and Bute Council.

I understand that there has been recent local media interest in the potential numbers of personnel moving to HMNB Clyde over the coming years and the impact this might have on local services such as education and health services. I would like to reassure you that the Department is committed to working closely with the local authorities in the Clyde area to assist them in planning for the future infrastructure and support needs of the area. As part of this process of continuous engagement with the local authorities, HMNB Clyde will continue to provide them with preliminary forecasts and to consult with them on the Department's plans, which may have an impact on the local communities.

I hope that you find the copy of the presentation helpful and that this letter has helped to explain the calculations and assumptions behind the data contained in the presentation.

Defence: Procurement

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many suppliers of *(a)* equipment, *(b)* personnel, *(c)* parts and *(d)* assembly facilities for the Vanguard-class Trident submarine maintenance project there are in each (i) Government Office region, (ii) local authority area and (iii) parliamentary constituency; [29631]

(2) how many suppliers of *(a)* equipment, *(b)* personnel, *(c)* parts and *(d)* assembly facilities for the L11 5A1 Long Range Rifle are located in each (i) Government Office region, (ii) local authority area and (iii) parliamentary constituency; [29655]

(3) how many *(a)* equipment, *(b)* personnel, *(c)* parts and *(d)* assembly facility suppliers for the Astute-class submarine construction there are in each (i) Government Office region, (ii) local authority area and (iii) parliamentary constituency; [29656]

(4) how many suppliers of *(a)* equipment, *(b)* personnel, *(c)* parts and *(d)* assembly facilities for the SA80 A2 L85 Individual Weapon are located in each (i) Government Office region, (ii) local authority area and (iii) parliamentary constituency. [29701]

Peter Luff: I will write to the hon. Member about her request shortly.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* Babcock International Group plc, *(b)* Finmeccanica SpA, *(c)* QinetiQ Group plc, *(d)* BAE Systems plc, *(e)* Hewlett-Packard

Company, *(f)* Rolls-Royce Group plc, *(g)* EADS NV3, *(h)* Lockheed Martin Corporation and *(i)* Thales SA was in each year since 2006; [29807]

(2) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* BAE Systems plc, including payments made to BAE Systems/Rockwell Collins Data Link Solutions LLC, *(b)* Corda Ltd, *(c)* Detica Group plc, *(d)* Detica Ltd, Europaams SAS, *(e)* IFS Defence Ltd, *(f)* MBDA France, *(g)* MBDA UK Ltd, *(h)* Piper Group PLC, *(i)* SAAB AB (Publ), *(j)* SAAB AB Gripen, *(k)* SAAB Barracuda AB, *(l)* SAAB Bofors Dynamics AB, *(m)* SAAB Seaeye Ltd and *(n)* SAAB Training Systems AB in each year since 2006; [29808]

(3) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* Aerosystems International Ltd, *(b)* Atlantic Inertial Systems Ltd, *(c)* BAE Systems (Defence Systems) Ltd, *(d)* BAE Systems (Hawk Synthetic Training) Ltd, *(e)* BAE Systems (Operations) Ltd, *(f)* BAE Systems Australia Ltd, *(g)* BAE Systems Bofors AB, *(h)* BAE Systems Defence Ltd, *(i)* BAE Systems Electronics Ltd, *(j)* BAE Systems Hagglunds AB, *(k)* BAE Systems Information and Electronic Systems Integration Inc, *(l)* BAE Systems Information and Electronic Warfare Systems, *(m)* BAE Systems Integrated System Technologies Ltd, *(n)* BAE Systems Land Systems (Bridging) Ltd, *(o)* BAE Systems Land Systems (Munitions and Ordnance) Ltd, *(p)* BAE Systems Land Systems (Weapons and Vehicles) Ltd, *(q)* BAE Systems Marine Ltd, *(r)* BAE Systems National Security Solutions Inc, *(s)* BAE Systems Pinzgauer Ltd, *(t)* BAE Systems PLC, *(u)* BAE Systems Regional Aircraft Ltd, *(v)* BAE Systems Surface Ships Integrated Support Ltd, *(w)* BAE Systems Surface Ships Ltd, *(x)* BAE Systems Surface Ships Maritime Ltd, *(y)* BAE Systems Surface Ships Portsmouth Ltd, *(z)* BAE Systems Surface Ships Support Ltd and (aa) BAE Systems (Aviation Services) Ltd in each year since 2006; [29809]

(4) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* Ascent Flight Training (Management) Ltd, *(b)* AWE Management Ltd, *(c)* AWE plc, *(d)* Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company, *(e)* Lockheed Martin Aerospace Systems Integration Corp, *(f)* Lockheed Martin Canada Inc, *(g)* Lockheed Martin Maritime Systems and Sensors Ltd, *(h)* Lockheed Martin Overseas Corp, *(i)* Lockheed Martin Sippican Inc, *(j)* Lockheed Martin UK Insys Ltd, *(k)* Lockheed Martin UK Integrated Systems and Solutions, *(l)* Lockheed Martin UK Ltd, *(m)* Lockheed Martin UK Strategic Systems Ltd and *(n)* Raytheon/Lockheed Martin Javelin Joint Venture in each year since 2006; [30085]

(5) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* ASAP Calibration Services Ltd, *(b)* Boldon James Ltd, *(c)* Graphics Research Corporation Ltd, *(d)* HVR Consulting Services Ltd, *(e)* QinetiQ Commerce Decisions Ltd, *(f)* QinetiQ Group plc, *(g)* QinetiQ Ltd and *(h)* QinetiQ Target Services Ltd in each year since 2006; [30086]

(6) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* AgustaWestland International Ltd, *(b)* Aviation Training International Ltd, *(c)* DRS C3 Systems Inc, *(d)* DRS Data Services Ltd, *(e)* DRS Technologies UK Ltd, *(f)* Europaams SAS, *(g)* Galileo Avionica Spa, *(h)* MBDA France, *(i)* MBDA UK Ltd, *(j)* Selex Communications Ltd, *(k)* Selex Galileo Ltd, *(l)* Selex Sensors and Airborne Systems Ltd, *(m)* Selex Systems Integration Ltd, *(n)* Vega Consulting Services Ltd and *(o)* Westland Helicopters Ltd in each year since 2006; [30087]

(7) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* EDS Defence Ltd, *(b)* Hewlett-Packard Ltd and *(c)* HP Enterprise Services Defence and Security UK Ltd in each year since 2006; [30088]

(8) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* Airbus UK Ltd, *(b)* Astrium Ltd, *(c)* EADS Defence and Security Systems Ltd, *(d)* EADS Deutschland GmbH, *(e)* EADS France SAS, *(f)* EADS Test and Services (UK) Ltd, *(g)* EADS Test Engineering Services (UK) Ltd, *(h)* Eurocopter, *(i)* Eurocopter UK Ltd, *(j)* Europaams SAS, *(k)* Infoterra Ltd, *(l)* MBDA France, *(m)* MBDA UK Ltd, *(n)* Paradigm Secure Communications Ltd and *(o)* Paradigm Services Ltd in each year since 2006; [30089]

(9) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* Babcock Dyncorp Ltd, *(b)* Babcock Integrated Technology Ltd, *(c)* Babcock International Group PLC, *(d)* Babcock Marine (Clyde) Ltd, *(e)* Babcock Marine (Rosyth) Ltd, *(f)* Babcock Support Services Ltd, *(g)* BNS Nuclear Services Ltd, *(h)* Debut Services (South West) Ltd, *(i)* Debut Services Ltd, *(j)* Devonport Royal Dockyard Ltd, *(k)* Frazer-Nash Consultancy Ltd, *(l)* Holdfast Training Services Ltd, *(m)* LSC Group Ltd, *(n)* Rosyth Royal Dockyard Ltd, *(o)* Rosyth Royal Dockyard Pension scheme and *(p)* Strachan and Henshaw Ltd in each year since 2006; [30090]

(10) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* Industria de Turbo Propulsores S.A., *(b)* Optimized Systems and Solutions Ltd, *(c)* Powerfield Ltd, *(d)* Rolls-Royce Corporation, *(e)* Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd and Co KG, *(f)* Rolls-Royce Marine Electrical Systems Ltd, *(g)* Rolls-Royce Marine Power Operations Ltd, *(h)* Rolls-Royce PLC, *(i)* Rolls-Royce Power Engineering PLC, *(j)* Rolls-Royce Turbomeca Ltd and *(k)* Vinters Engineering PLC in each year since 2006; [30114]

(11) what the monetary value was of payments made by his Department to *(a)* Europaams SAS, *(b)* Quintec Associates Ltd, *(c)* Thales Air Defence Ltd, *(d)* Thales ATM Ltd, *(e)* Thales Avionics Electrical Systems Ltd, *(f)* Thales Avionics Ltd, *(g)* Thales Communications Inc, *(h)* Thales Communications Ltd, *(i)* Thales E-Security Ltd, *(j)* Thales Missile Electronics Ltd, *(k)* Thales Naval Ltd, *(l)* Thales Nederland BV, *(m)* Thales Norway AS, *(n)* Thales Optronics (Bury St Edmunds) Ltd, *(o)* Thales Optronics Ltd, *(p)* Thales Systemes Aeroportes SA, *(q)* Thales Training and Simulation (ACE) Ltd, *(r)* Thales Training and Simulation (Eagle Middle Wallop) Ltd, *(s)* Thales Training and Simulation (Merlin) Ltd, *(t)* Thales Training and Simulation Ltd, *(u)* Thales UK Ltd and *(v)* Thales Underwater Systems Ltd in each year since 2006. [30115]

Peter Luff: General information on Ministry of Defence spending with individual companies is available in UK Defence Statistics 2010 at table 1.17, organisations paid

£5 million or more in 2009-10. I will write to the hon. Member with additional information as soon as this is available.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's annual budget for conferences was on *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [29961]

Mr Robathan: The Ministry of Defence does not have a discrete budget for conference expenditure. The hosting of, or attendance at, a conference is determined by business need and all conference-related expenditure must be necessary, appropriate, cost-effective and an admissible charge to public funds.

The financial management measures notified to all staff by the Permanent Under-Secretary and Chief of Defence Staff in July 2010 will reduce expenditure on conferences by constraining travel and limiting numbers attending meetings and events.

Electronic Warfare

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what funding his Department has allocated to cyber security matters in each year from 2010-11 to 2014-15; and to which *(a)* units in his Department and *(b)* programmes and projects such funding has been allocated. [29553]

Nick Harvey: £650 million has been agreed to fund the National Cyber Programme across Government to enhance our protection in cyber space. The Ministry of Defence is in the process of completing its annual planning round which will allocate detailed programme budgets. This is expected to conclude in early 2011.

Ex-servicemen: Radiation Exposure

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many meetings *(a)* he, *(b)* his predecessors and *(c)* his officials have had with representatives of the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association in the last three years. [28457]

Mr Robathan: I understand that neither my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Defence, nor his predecessors, have met with representatives of the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (BNTVA) in the last three years. However, I can confirm that the hon. Member for North Durham (Mr Jones), when he was a Defence Minister, met with the Association twice, and Defence officials have met with them on at least three occasions.

The Ministry of Defence officials and BNTVA members have also been present at a number of meetings and conferences dealing with a variety of veterans' related issues.

Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information his Department holds on the number of *(a)* British citizens and *(b)* dependants of British citizens compensated under nuclear test veteran compensation schemes operated by foreign Governments; and if he will estimate how many such persons would be eligible for compensation under the arrangements operated by his Department. [29015]

Mr Robathan: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) does not hold this information and we could not estimate how many UK nationals could be eligible for compensation under schemes operated by foreign Governments.

UK nationals could have been employed in any number of roles in support of foreign Governments' nuclear tests, and there would have been no requirement for the MOD to be aware of this.

Harrier Aircraft

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what advice informed his decision to end the Harrier fleet of jets. [30606]

Peter Luff: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 24 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 317-19W, to my hon. Friends the Members for New Forest East (Dr Lewis) and for Portsmouth North (Penny Mordaunt).

Military Aircraft: Training

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what training his Department has provided for *(a)* fast jet, *(b)* helicopter and *(c)* multi-engine pilots overseas by (i) location, (ii) aircraft type, (iii) hours flown and (iv) cost in each of the last five years. [29805]

Nick Harvey: All initial flying training for UK fast jets, helicopters, and multi-engine pilots takes place within the UK. However, training does not cease after pilots have completed their formal training but continues throughout their flying careers, because all operational flying includes an element of training. Small numbers of UK pilots are regularly posted on exchange tours overseas and this often involves conversion training to adapt to specific aircraft types. In addition, UK pilots regularly take part in flying exercises overseas with international partners. However, the information requested on location, aircraft type, hours flown and costs for these activities outside of the UK is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Military Bases: Wales

Simon Hart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to announce his proposals for the future of Ministry of Defence establishments in Wales. [27006]

Nick Harvey: Following the Strategic Defence and Security Review, final decisions on the future of defence establishments across the UK will be made as quickly as possible. We plan to be as open as we can be. These decisions will require detailed investment appraisals and wider impact assessments. They will primarily focus on the military capability we require but will be sensitive to economic and social impacts and the needs of our personnel and their families.

Further to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's announcement on 19 October 2010, no further decisions have been taken in respect of the future of St Athan as a result of the Defence Technical Training Change Programme. This will build on the Defence Training Rationalisation (DTR) project for which the private finance initiative procurement was cancelled on 19 October 2010.

Nuclear Weapons: Testing

Mr Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what documents relating to nuclear tests in 1957 and 1958 his Department holds but has not published. [26900]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 2 December 2010]*: In accordance with the Public Records Acts, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) withholds from release to the public at the National Archives files that are over 30 years old, or extracts from them, if and for so long as their contents are judged to be sensitive. The MOD continues to work closely with the War Pensions Tribunal with a view to ensuring that all relevant documents relating to the war pensions appeals are disclosed to the Tribunal. Special security arrangements have been agreed with the Tribunal to ensure appropriate handling of any highly classified documents.

RAF Lossiemouth: Tornado Aircraft

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many passes have taken place at *(a)* RAF Holbeach, *(b)* RAF Tain and *(c)* the Cape Wrath Range by Tornado GR4s taking off from RAF Lossiemouth in each year since 2004. [29806]

Nick Harvey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 16 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 728-32W. Further information concerning the passes by Tornado GR4s from RAF Lossiemouth that have taken place at Defence Training Estate (DTE) Holbeach, DTE Tain and DTE Cape Wrath is held in different formats by each of the ranges so can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

HEALTH

Ambulance Services: Standards

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the letter of 23 September 2010 from his Department's Director of Performance to the Chief Executive of each strategic health authority, what information his Department has received from each strategic health authority in respect of *(a)* patient handover between ambulance and acute services and *(b)* service operation issues in each NHS trust; if he will place in the Library a copy of each such report received by his Department; and what the job title is of the designated Winter Lead in each strategic health authority. [30904]

Mr Simon Burns: Information about patient handover between ambulance and acute services is published at:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Statistics/Performancedataandstatistics/WeeklySituationReports/index.htm

Information on service operation issues in each national health service trust is management information which allows the local NHS and the Department to gauge individual health economy operational problems. The Department is currently reviewing publication of this information.

The job titles of designated winter leads in each strategic health authority are provided as follows:

SHA	*Job title*
West Midlands	Director of Performance and Provider Development
NHS South West	Director of Finance and Performance
North East (joint)	Strategic Head of Performance Strategic Head of Emergency Preparedness and Resilience
NHS North West	Chief Nurse and Executive Director of Performance and Quality
South Central	Head of Performance
NHS London	Head of Performance Improvement
East Midlands	Director of Provider Development
South East Coast	Director of Finance and Performance
NHS Yorkshire and the Humber	Deputy Director of Performance
East of England	Director of Commissioning, Performance and QIPP

Dementia: Health Services

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made on steps to improve the care of dementia since the meeting of the Ministerial Task Force for Dementia in September 2010. [30893]

Paul Burstow: The Ministerial Advisory Group on Dementia Research is currently working via its subgroups on the key issues affecting dementia with the aim of suggesting practical ways to improve the volume, quality and impact of dementia research. The sub groups will report back on their progress to the final meeting of the ministerial group in March 2011, as reported in the Department's November Structural Reform Plan Monthly Implementation Update available at:

www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_122326.pdf

Most recently, at the end of September we published a new dementia outcomes focused Implementation Plan. This set out the Department's priority objectives for improving the care of those with dementia including a focus on early diagnosis and intervention for all, improved quality of care in general hospitals, living well with dementia in care homes and reducing the use of antipsychotic medication to treat people with dementia.

In support of the Implementation Plan a National Dementia Declaration was jointly launched in October by the Government and the Alzheimer's Society. This brings together a range of bodies, each setting out what they plan to do to support the implementation of the strategy. With respect to research, for example, the Alzheimer's Research Trust is launching a new strategy to increase their research spending and is supporting 37 new projects including pioneering work on diagnosis using brain scans, further research on unravelling the genetics of the disease, and research on the biomarkers which play a crucial role in diagnosis and understanding disease progression. They will also be undertaking a project working with scientists to better understand research capacity in the field looking at encouraging more people into this area.

The Department is developing a commissioning pack to provide guidance for primary care trusts and local authorities on how best to commission dementia services.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30030]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department does not hold this level of detailed information. However, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury announced a package of departmental measures in May that are designed to deliver efficiency savings of some £6 billion (across Government) in the current financial year. These measures include a freeze on communications, marketing and advertising, the definition of which includes expenditure on conferences.

In response to the introduction of these measures, the Department has implemented a range of controls, which includes the establishment of a 'Communications Control Panel' that scrutinises business cases from within the Department and its arm's length bodies. Beyond delegated limits, Cabinet Office approval has to be sought.

Diabetes: Health Education

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS spent on diabetes prevention in each of the last five years. [30363]

Paul Burstow: There are a range of factors which contribute to the development of type 2 diabetes; some of which are modifiable and appropriate interventions can reduce the risk of, or delay the onset of, the disease. However, as these interventions also reduce the risk of other diseases, it is very difficult to disaggregate those specifically aimed at diabetes prevention.

This information is not collected centrally.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS spent on diabetes information leaflets in each of the last five years. [30450]

Paul Burstow: It is generally the responsibility of primary care trusts and local providers of diabetes services to ensure that patients have information about their condition. At a national level, NHS Diabetes, the national service improvement team, has produced five patient focused leaflets in the last three years at a total cost of £6,848.

This information is not collected centrally.

Doctors: Training

Richard Fuller: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of foundation house officers have dropped out of courses *(a)* FHO1 and *(b)* FHO2 in each year since 2005. [29782]

Anne Milton: We do not have any information before 2009. The UK Foundation Programme Office has collected data on the proportion of foundation doctors who have dropped out of F1 or F2 for the last two years (2009 and 2010).

In 2009 0.5% of F1 doctors did not complete their F1 year and 0.9% did not complete their F2 year. In 2010, 0.5% of F1 doctors did not complete their F1 year and 0.75% did not complete their F2 year.

Drinking Water

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many public drinking water fountains were installed in each year since 2005. [30439]

Anne Milton: The Department is not responsible for the installation of public drinking water fountains and does not hold data on the topic.

Prisons: Drugs

Dr Thérèse Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost was of providing integrated drug treatment systems to each *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* prison (i) in total and (ii) by prisoner in each of the last three financial years. [30188]

Paul Burstow: This information has been placed in the Library.

Health Services: Bassetlaw and Doncaster

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions he has received representations from non-executive directors of *(a)* Bassetlaw primary care trust, *(b)* Doncaster primary care trust and *(c)* Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust on (i) changes to the (A) treatment and (B) clinical outputs of his Department, (ii) the National Clinical Advisory Team, (iii) the strategic health authorities of each institution and (iv) other hospitals in the last 12 months. [30514]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department is not aware of any representations from any of the non-executive directors of the organisations named on changes to the treatment and clinical outputs of this Department, the National Clinical Advisory Team, the strategic health authorities of each institution, or other hospitals in the last 12 months.

Health Services: Foreign Nationals

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much expenditure the NHS recovered from overseas patients who received treatment in West Reading constituency under non-reciprocal agreements in each of the last 10 years. [29998]

Anne Milton: The information is not available in the format requested. Data are collected on income for overseas patients under non-reciprocal agreements in the primary care trust (PCT) and national health service trust audited summarisation schedules. These data are provided in the following table for the organisations that provide health care to the West Reading constituency. However these bodies also provide health care to other constituencies and the Department is unable to break down the data by constituency.

Income from overseas patients under non-reciprocal agreements 2003-04 to 2009-10

£000

Organisation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Newbury and Community PCT	0	0	0				
Reading PCT	0	0	0				
Wokingham PCT	0	0	0				
Berkshire West PCT				0	0	0	0
Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospitals NHS Trust	135	155	269	35			
Total	135	155	269	35	0	0	0

Notes:

1. The Department does not collect data from NHS foundation trusts. The Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospitals NHS Trust obtained foundation trust status on 1 June 2006, the data provided for 2006-07 are only for the part of the year the organisation operated as an NHS trust.
2. In 2006-07 Newbury and Community PCT, Reading PCT and Wokingham PCT merged to form the new Berkshire West PCT.
3. In common with many other public and private sector organisations the Department only holds accounting data at organisation level for seven years, and therefore data are only available for the financial years 2003-04 to 2009-10.

Source:

Audited Summarisation Schedules 2003-04 to 2009-10

HIV Infection

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take steps to reduce the level of undiagnosed HIV. [30480]

Anne Milton: On 1 December, the Health Protection Agency published an interim report "Time to test for HIV: Expanded healthcare and community HIV testing in England" on their review of these pilots. A copy of the report has been placed in the Library. Findings show that expanding HIV testing in hospital/general practitioner/community settings is feasible, and acceptable to patients and staff. These findings from these pilots will add to our evidence base on increasing HIV testing especially in high prevalence areas. A full report will be produced early next year.

The Department has also funded the Medical Foundation for AIDS and Sexual Health to produce the training resource for non-specialist staff, "Tackling HIV Testing increasing detection and diagnosis".

HIV Infection: Tuberculosis

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what proportion of tuberculosis patients are also infected with HIV; [30113]

(2) whether his Department is taking steps to encourage testing for HIV of patients diagnosed with tuberculosis. [30122]

Anne Milton: Data from 2008, the most recent available, indicate that 7.1% of patients with tuberculosis (TB) aged 15 years and over in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are co-infected with HIV.

The Department supported development of the following guidance that recommends shared case management between TB and HIV professions, including testing, as follows:

Clinical Diagnosis and Management of Tuberculosis, and Measures for its Prevention and Control (National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), 2006);

Tuberculosis Prevention and Treatment: a Toolkit for Planning, Commissioning and Delivering High-Quality Services in England (DH, 2007);

Recommended Standards for NHS HIV Services (2003);

HIV in Primary Care (2004); and

HIV for non-HIV Specialists (2008).

These documents have already been placed in the Library.

Hospitals: Consultants

John Healey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms are in place to ensure that hospital consultants have adequate protected time for supporting professional activities; and if he will make a statement. [30744]

Mr Simon Burns: The precise number and ratio of supporting professional activities in each consultant job plan are a matter for local determination, as part of the consultant job planning process. Job planning is based on a partnership approach. The job plan will be reviewed annually and the review will examine all aspects of the job plan including any possible changes to duties or responsibilities. The annual job plan review may result in a revised prospective job plan. An interim review of the job plan may also be conducted where duties, responsibilities, accountability arrangements or objectives have changed or need to change significantly within the year.

The consultants' contract ensures that senior doctors' time is used in the best interests of patients, by providing flexibility in job planning agreements between individual doctors and trusts. The contract fully recognises the value of wider work in the interests of the national health service.

John Healey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate he has made of the average protected time per week a hospital consultant has for Supporting Professional Activities in each NHS trust. [30905]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department has not made any recent estimate of the number of Supporting Professional Activities in hospital consultants' job plans.

The consultants' contract ensures that senior doctors' time is used in the best interests of patients, by providing flexibility in job planning agreements between individual doctors and trusts. Job plans are agreed in partnership between individual consultants and their employers, and should be consistent with organisational objectives and patient and service needs.

The breakdown between direct clinical care activities, supporting professional activities and other duties in each consultant's job plan is a matter for local determination as part of the consultant job planning process.

Injuries: Offensive Weapons

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made by the Information Sharing Implementation Group on the sharing of non-confidential information on firearm and knife injuries between hospitals and police forces. [30104]

Anne Milton: As of March 2010 there were 198 hospitals with Type 1 Emergency Departments in England which could support violence reduction through non-confidential information sharing. We estimate that in March 2010 there were 108 hospitals collecting and sharing violent assault data in some format. Of these, we understand that 52 were collecting the minimum data and sharing them at least once per month. At this time 90 hospitals were not sharing data at all as of March 2010.

The Implementation Group has analysed the challenge of delivering the coalition commitment and agreed a programme of work to support delivery. One of the first actions of this programme was delivering additional funding of £743,000 to various projects throughout the national health service in November 2010. The group will also oversee the establishment of a regular progress update on the number of hospitals collecting and sharing information—to commence early in 2011. The group will also be investigating the impact of information sharing on violence in England.

Malnutrition

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate has been made of the cost to the NHS of malnutrition in the last five years. [28345]

Anne Milton: The Department has made no assessment of the cost of malnutrition to the national health service.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence published guidelines on malnutrition in 2006, that recommended all hospital patients, on admission and all out-patients at their first clinic appointment, should be screened (weighed, measured, and have Body Mass Index (BMI) calculated). Also, nutrition support should be considered in people who are malnourished.

The guidelines also state that all acute hospital trusts should employ at least one specialist nutrition support nurse and establish a nutrition steering committee, while all health care professionals directly involved in patient care should be educated and trained on the importance of providing adequate nutrition.

Information on the amount of malnutrition based hospital admissions over the last five years has been placed in the Library.

Medical Treatments Abroad: Finance

Mary Macleod: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many applications were made for funding for treatment abroad under Article 49 (now article 56 of the Lisbon Treaty) in the last 12 months; and how many such applications resulted in reimbursement. [29984]

Anne Milton: This information is not collected by the Department.

Currently, the numbers of people travelling overseas for treatment are low. We know, for example, that less than 1,000 people travel each year under the arrangements enshrined in article 22 of Regulation (EEC) 1408/71—i.e. the S2 (formally E112) route.

Decisions relating to the application of fundamental rights under article 56 are made locally by national health service commissioners. Accordingly, there is currently no central data collection as to how many patients are requesting treatment via this route, whether the request is approved or refused (and on what grounds), what treatment is being requested or how much it costs.

However, primary legislation has been introduced in relation to EUROSTAT, the European Union (EU) organisation which collects and analyses data on a range of issues across the EU), this requires all member states to collect data on cross-border health care under article 56. Currently, we are awaiting the development of secondary legislation by the Commission before the United Kingdom (UK) can consider how to transpose these requirements.

Additionally, a European directive on patients' rights in cross-border health care is currently the subject of negotiations in Europe. The intention behind the directive is to clarify and codify patients' rights in this area, within a single legal instrument. Depending on the progress of negotiations, a directive may be adopted in spring 2011. We intend looking at article 56 data collection requirements as part of the work to transpose the directive into UK law and NHS systems.

Mental Health Services: Young People

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people made the transition from child and adolescent mental health services to adult mental health services at the age of *(a)* 16 and *(b)* 18 in (i) 2008-09 and (ii) 2009-10; [29201]

(2) how many people aged 18 years and in receipt of support from child and adolescent mental health services did not make the transition to adult mental health services in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [29202]

Paul Burstow: The transition from child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) to adult services is a critical point for young people with complex mental health needs. The Government are developing support to help young people's and adult services improve these transitions to ensure that both the processes and the models of care meet the needs of young people and their families.

In response to the final report of the independent CAMHS review published in November 2008, which was critical of transitional arrangements, a number of pieces of work on the transition between children's and adult mental health care have been set-up. The Social Care Institute for Excellence, the National CAMHS Support Service and National Mental Health Development Unit are collaborating to produce a series of resources to support practitioners and commissioners to provide better care for adolescents and young adults.

Additionally the new commissioning arrangements proposed by the Government provide an opportunity to improve the commissioning of the full range of emotional wellbeing and mental health services, including transition from CAMHS to adult mental health services.

The Government announced in September that a new mental health strategy is being produced. The Government intend a wholesale shift in emphasis that puts mental health outcomes alongside physical health indicators in assessments of the quality of the national health service. The strategy will take a cross-Government and life course approach focusing on outcomes that are meaningful to patients and their families. The strategy is due to be published in the new year.

This information is not collected centrally.

Mental Illness: Employment Tribunals Service

Simon Hart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the merits of extending the application cut-off date for mental health patients pursuing industrial tribunals. [27607]

Mr Davey: I have been asked to reply.

We have not considered extending the time limits in this area. Employment tribunals already have discretion to accept an out of time application depending on the reason for the delay. In some jurisdictions, employment tribunals may consider claims made out of time where it was not reasonably practicable for a claim to have been submitted within the time limit. In others, late claims may be considered where it is just and equitable to do so. Responses to a public consultation in 2007 on time limits for making employment tribunal claims did not evidence any significant problems.

NHS: Recruitment

Mr Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what rules are in place in relation to NHS appointments in respect of which those responsible for filling non-executive posts are *(a)* colleagues of and *(b)* have personal links with those seeking appointment. [30887]

Mr Simon Burns: All candidates for national health service public appointments are interviewed by a selection panel which includes an independent public appointments assessor, who provides independent scrutiny of the selection process.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments' code of practice contains rules around how potential conflicts of interest between those involved in the selection process and candidates should be handled.

Organs: Donors

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make an estimate of the effects on the number of organs available for donation annually of a scheme comparable to the organ donation system proposed by the Welsh Assembly Government; [30859]

(2) if he will undertake an assessment for benchmarking purposes of the effectiveness of the organ donation system proposed by the Welsh Assembly Government following its introduction. [30860]

Anne Milton: The Welsh Assembly Government has proposed in its legislative programme a Legislative Competence Order (LCO) to introduce an opt-out system of organ donation in Wales. Officials from the Wales Office and the Welsh Assembly Government are working closely with the Department as these proposals are considered.

Government Ministers will comment as the process develops. This will include estimating the effects on the numbers of organs available for donation in Wales and for the United Kingdom as a whole. Should the LCO be agreed by Parliament and a presumed consent system subsequently introduced in Wales, Ministers will wish to monitor progress to assess its effectiveness.

Prescriptions: Fees and Charges

Mr Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of exemptions from prescription charges for each class of condition and illness in the most recent year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [30039]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department does not hold information about which medical condition or illness a patient claimed exemption under in relation to a particular prescription item. Therefore, it is not possible to provide an estimate of the cost to the public purse of exemptions from prescription charges for each class of condition or illness.

Primary Care Trusts and NDPBs

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has for the use of savings to the public purse arising from the abolition of *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department. [30360]

Mr Simon Burns: The spending review announced that the costs of administration across the health system will be reduced by one third in real terms by 2014-15, delivering a recurrent annual saving of £1.9 billion. This includes savings from significantly reducing the number and cost of our non-departmental public bodies and from reforming and reducing the costs of administration in the national health service, including through the proposed abolition of primary care trusts and strategic health authorities.

These savings, along with all other efficiency savings, will be re-invested in services for patients. It will be the responsibility of local commissioners to determine, within their overall budgets, how best these savings can be invested in order to meet the needs of, and improve outcomes for, their local populations.

Social Services: Finance

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms his Department plans to use to ensure that funding for social care allocated as part of the comprehensive spending review is spent for that purpose by local authorities. [30894]

Paul Burstow: The funding allocated for social care comes in three strands: the local government formula grant, grant funding from the Department to local authorities, and funding provided from within the national health service to support social care services that also benefit health.

Money that goes to local authorities through formula grant forms the majority of social care allocations. This is unhypothecated, in order to give local authorities the freedom to respond to local needs and priorities.

Alongside formula grant, this spending review announced an additional £2 billion by 2014-15 for social care. Of this £2 billion:

Additional grant funding, rising to £1 billion by 2014-15, will be made available for social care. This funding will be allocated in addition to the Department's existing social care grants, which will rise in line with inflation. Total grant funding from the Department for social care will reach £2.4 billion by 2014-15. The Department has taken the decision to roll the additional £1 billion into formula grant supporting the localism agenda, so local authorities have the ability to spend money on local needs. This additional money will only go to local authorities responsible for social care.

Funding, rising to £1 billion by 2014-15, will be provided from within the NHS to support social care services which benefit health. The allocation of funding from the NHS will be outlined in the NHS operating framework, due to be released on 15 December 2010. This money is split in two.

Next year £150 million will be allocated to primary care trusts (PCTs) to commission re-ablement services and £648 million will be transferred via an agreement under section 256 of the National Health Service Act 2006 to spend on social care services that also benefit health. PCTs will work with local authorities to jointly agree spend of the £648 million on services based on the local joint strategic needs assessment.

Surgery

Mary Macleod: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* elective and *(b)* non-elective surgical episodes were carried out in each primary care trust area in each year since 2006. [29977]

Mr Simon Burns: The NHS Information Centre collects Hospital Episode Statistics data which show the numbers of elective and non-elective finished admission episodes that had a main operative procedure or intervention.

These data, for each primary care trust since 2006, have been placed in the Library.

Mary Macleod: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average length of stay was for patients undergoing an elective surgical procedure in each primary care trust area in each year since 2006. [29978]

Mr Simon Burns: The NHS Information Centre collects Hospital Episode Statistics data which show the numbers of elective and non-elective finished admission episodes that had a main operative procedure or intervention.

The average length of stay for patients who have had a main operative procedure or intervention is shown in the following table.

Average length of stay in days for patients undergoing a main elective procedure or intervention by primary care trust (PCT) of responsibility from 2006-07 to 2009-10: Activity in English national health service hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector

PCT Name	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
South Gloucestershire PCT	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.3
Havering PCT	3.9	2.5	3.6	3.8
Kingston PCT	5.5	5.4	4.5	3.9
Bromley PCT	3.9	4.0	3.5	3.4
Greenwich Teaching PCT	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.7
Barnet PCT	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.8
North East Lincolnshire PCT	3.2	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hillingdon PCT	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.4
Enfield PCT	3.4	3.7	3.5	3.3
Barking and Dagenham PCT	4.1	3.0	3.4	3.6
City and Hackney Teaching PCT	3.4	3.4	4.6	5.2
Tower Hamlets PCT	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.8
Newham PCT	3.5	3.6	3.8	4.6
Haringey Teaching PCT	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.6
Blackburn With Darwen PCT	2.8	3.0	3.0	2.7
Herefordshire PCT	3.6	3.6	3.8	4.0
Milton Keynes PCT	2.6	2.6	3.4	3.2
Newcastle PCT	3.5	3.4	3.1	3.1
North Tyneside PCT	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.7
Hartlepool PCT	3.3	3.2	3.1	2.8
North Tees PCT	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.1
North Lincolnshire PCT	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3
Nottingham City PCT	3.3	3.0	3.1	2.8
Bassetlaw PCT	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.3
Plymouth Teaching PCT	3.4	3.2	3.5	3.5
Salford PCT	3.6	3.5	4.0	3.1
Stockport PCT	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.1
Portsmouth City Teaching PCT	3.2	3.8	3.6	3.9
Bath and North East Somerset PCT	4.4	4.1	4.4	3.8
Luton PCT	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.2
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	2.8	3.2	3.1	3.1
Rotherham PCT	3.4	3.2	3.4	3.2
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.4
Blackpool PCT	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.7
Bolton PCT	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.6
Ealing PCT	3.5	3.7	3.6	3.4
Hounslow PCT	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.5
Warrington PCT	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.3
Knowsley PCT	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5
Oldham PCT	3.8	3.6	3.3	3.4
Calderdale PCT	3.4	3.3	3.0	3.0
Darlington PCT	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.4
Barnsley PCT	3.2	3.4	3.7	3.5
Bury PCT	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.4
Swindon PCT	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.4
Brent Teaching PCT	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.2
Harrow PCT	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.3
Camden PCT	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.8
Islington PCT	3.6	3.9	3.9	3.6
Croydon PCT	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.1
Gateshead PCT	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.3
South Tyneside PCT	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.3

Average length of stay in days for patients undergoing a main elective procedure or intervention by primary care trust (PCT) of responsibility from 2006-07 to 2009-10: Activity in English national health service hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector

PCT Name	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Sunderland Teaching PCT	3.3	2.9	2.9	2.9
Middlesbrough PCT	4.0	3.4	3.3	3.1
Southampton City PCT	3.5	3.3	3.7	4.3
Medway PCT	4.1	3.5	3.5	3.5
Kensington And Chelsea PCT	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.6
Westminster PCT	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.8
Lambeth PCT	4.0	3.8	3.9	4.1
Southwark PCT	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.8
Lewisham PCT	3.9	4.3	4.9	4.1
Wandsworth PCT	4.6	4.4	4.3	4.7
Tameside and Glossop PCT	3.8	3.8	3.3	3.4
Brighton and Hove City PCT	2.6	2.6	2.9	3.4
South Birmingham PCT	4.2	4.0	3.7	3.5
Shropshire County PCT	3.8	4.1	4.4	4.1
Walsall Teaching PCT	4.4	4.1	4.0	4.0
Richmond And Twickenham PCT	5.4	5.1	5.4	4.9
Sutton And Merton PCT	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.8
North Somerset PCT	3.7	4.2	3.9	3.5
Coventry Teaching PCT	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.5
Telford And Wrekin PCT	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.8
Wolverhampton City PCT	4.0	4.0	3.6	3.7
Heart of Birmingham Teaching PCT	3.9	3.7	3.5	3.4
Leeds PCT	3.9	4.0	3.6	3.5
Kirklees PCT	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.3
Wakefield District PCT	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.0
Sheffield PCT	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.4
Doncaster PCT	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Derbyshire County PCT	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.6
Derby City PCT	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.5
Nottinghamshire County Teaching PCT	3.7	3.3	3.4	3.3
Lincolnshire Teaching PCT	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.4
Redbridge PCT	4.3	3.3	3.6	3.7
Waltham Forest PCT	4.1	3.7	3.8	4.0
County Durham PCT	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.4
Cumbria PCT	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.8
North Lancashire PCT	3.6	3.2	3.6	4.1
Central Lancashire PCT	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.6
East Lancashire Teaching PCT	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.1
Sefton PCT	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.4
Wirral PCT	5.8	4.8	5.2	5.6
Liverpool PCT	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.9
Halton and St Helens PCT	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.6
Western Cheshire PCT	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.3
Central And Eastern Cheshire PCT	2.8	3.8	3.7	3.5
Heywood, Middleton And Rochdale PCT	4.0	3.6	3.3	3.3
Trafford PCT	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4
Manchester PCT	3.5	3.2	3.3	3.3
North Yorkshire and York PCT	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4
East Riding of Yorkshire PCT	3.3	3.4	3.6	3.5
Hull Teaching PCT	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.4
Bradford And Airedale Teaching PCT	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.1
South East Essex PCT	4.2	4.0	3.9	3.6
Bedfordshire PCT	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.3
East and North Hertfordshire PCT	3.7	3.8	3.1	3.5
West Hertfordshire PCT	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.3
Surrey PCT	4.1	3.8	3.5	3.4
West Sussex PCT	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4
East Sussex Downs And Weald PCT	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.5
Hastings And Rother PCT	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9
West Kent PCT	3.4	2.8	3.2	3.4
Leicestershire County And Rutland PCT	4.0	3.6	3.7	3.7
Leicester City PCT	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.4
Northamptonshire Teaching PCT	3.8	3.9	3.5	3.8
Dudley PCT	4.2	4.7	4.2	3.6
Sandwell PCT	4.3	3.8	3.6	3.5
Birmingham East And North PCT	4.3	3.9	3.8	3.8
North Staffordshire PCT	2.5	6.1	6.4	6.6
Stoke On Trent PCT	2.1	6.3	6.9	7.1
South Staffordshire PCT	3.1	3.8	4.0	3.7
Worcestershire PCT	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.6
Warwickshire PCT	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.4
Peterborough PCT	3.4	3.1	2.8	2.7
Cambridgeshire PCT	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.2
Norfolk PCT	3.6	3.4	3.0	2.9
Great Yarmouth and Waveney PCT	3.9	3.8	3.3	3.2
Suffolk PCT	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.2
West Essex PCT	4.6	4.2	3.8	3.8
North East Essex PCT	4.1	3.4	3.4	3.3
Mid Essex PCT	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.0
South West Essex PCT	4.4	4.3	4.8	4.7
Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.3
Hampshire PCT	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.7
Buckinghamshire PCT	3.5	3.3	3.6	3.9
Oxfordshire PCT	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.5
Berkshire West PCT	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.6
Berkshire East PCT	3.3	3.0	3.6	3.5
Gloucestershire PCT	3.9	4.1	4.0	3.7
Bristol PCT	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.4
Wiltshire PCT	4.9	4.0	4.1	3.6
Somerset PCT	3.8	3.7	3.4	3.3
Dorset PCT	3.6	3.6	3.3	3.3
Bournemouth and Poole PCT	3.6	3.8	3.2	3.4
Cornwall and Isles Of Scilly PCT	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.4
Devon PCT	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5
Redcar and Cleveland PCT	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.3
Isle of Wight NHS PCT	3.9	4.2	3.8	3.7

Average length of stay in days for patients undergoing a main elective procedure or intervention by primary care trust (PCT) of responsibility from 2006-07 to 2009-10: Activity in English national health service hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector

PCT Name	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Northumberland Care Trust	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.4
Bexley Care Trust	4.0	3.6	3.3	3.5
Torbay Care Trust	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.2
Solihull Care Trust	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.7
North East Lincolnshire Care Trust Plus	n/a	3.0	3.1	3.5
Not Applicable	5.3	5.5	5.5	5.6
Unknown	4.3	4.2	4.2	6.4

n/a = not available.

Note:

PCT of responsibility is identified by establishing the postcode of the patient's general practitioner practice. "Not Applicable" is where the postcode cannot be derived; "unknown" is where the postcode has not been recorded.

Source:

Hospital episode statistics (HES), the NHS information centre for health and social care

EDUCATION

Children in Care

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many children subject to a care order, police protection order or emergency protection order left care in England in each year from 1989 to 2005. [25207]

Tim Loughton: The number of children who were subject to a care order, police protection order, or emergency protection order that left care between 1993 and 2005 is shown in the following table. Information for the year ending 31 March 1992 is affected by the introduction of the Children Act 1989 on 14 October 1991 when a new system of legal statuses was introduced and so it is not possible to extract a full year's worth of data. Information prior to 1992 is not available.

Children subject to a care order, police protection order or emergency protection order who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March[1, 2, 3, 4]

Years ending 31 March 1993 to 2005

	Number of children
1993[5]	8,300
1994[5]	7,700
1995[5]	7,100
1996[5]	6,500
1997[5]	6,200
1998[6]	6,700
1999[6]	6,600
2000[6]	6,800
2001[6]	7,200
2002[6]	7,900
2003[6]	8,000
2004[5]	8,900
2005[5]	8,600

[1] Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100 if they exceed 1,000, and to the nearest 10, otherwise.

[2] Only the last occasion on which a child ceased to be looked after in the year has been counted.

[3] Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.

[4] Historical data may differ from older publications. This is mainly due to the implementation of amendments and corrections sent by some local authorities after the publication date of previous materials.

[5] Figures are taken from the SSDA903 return which covered all children looked after.

[6] Figures are derived from the SSDA903 one third sample survey.

Source:

SSDA903

Simon Hart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much his Department spent on *(a)* children in care and *(b)* litigation in connection with such children in each year since 2007. [27979]

Tim Loughton: Most expenditure in support of looked after children (including children in care) is through local authorities. In 2007-08 local authority net expenditure recorded by them under the heading of children looked after amounted to £2,181 million, and in 2008-09 the figure was £2,453 million. Data for 2009-10 will be available in early 2011. These figures do not include other expenditure which contributes to supporting looked after children, such as expenditure on social worker salaries, on undertaking assessments of need or on delivering wider services such as school and leisure services. Over the last three financial years the Department itself has directly spent some £65 million in support of looked after children through the Care Matters programme budget; other departmental spending programmes have also contributed to improving outcomes for these children.

The cost to the Department since September 2008 of litigation in connection with looked after children, including in relation to care leavers and adoption, is in the region of £60,000. The cost of local authorities of litigation in respect of looked after children is not collected centrally.

Departmental Communication

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Dundee East (Stewart Hosie) of 11 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 12-13W, if he will place in the Library a copy of the guidance issued to staff of his Department on the preferences of the Under-Secretary of State for Education, the hon. Member for East Worthing and Shoreham (Tim Loughton) Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families in respect of *(a)* preparation of briefing, *(b)* preparation of speeches, *(c)* preparation of replies to official correspondence, *(d)* organisation of appointments and *(e)* conduct of meetings; and if he will make a statement; [28081]

(2) whether the Under-Secretary has provided guidance to his officials on the preparation of *(a)* preparation of (i) briefings, (ii) speeches and (iii) papers, *(b)* conduct of his meetings and *(c)* organisation of his diary; and if he will make a statement. [29328]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 2 and 7 December 2010]*: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Departmental Communications

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether *(a)* the Under-Secretary of State for Education, the hon. Member for East Worthing and Shoreham (Tim Loughton) and *(b)* officials of his Department have had (i) meetings, (ii) discussions and (iii) correspondence with representatives of Classwatch since his appointment; and if he will make a statement. [29329]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: I have had no meetings, discussions or correspondence with representatives of Classwatch since my appointment.

I met the directors once in a personal capacity, soon after my appointment, as part of a leaving party. I also received financial information for the purpose of making my tax return.

I have sent the chief executive officer a Christmas card.

I am not aware that any official in the Department has had meetings, discussions or correspondence with Classwatch during this period.

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether *(a)* the Under-Secretary of State for Education, the hon. Member for East Worthing and Shoreham (Tim Loughton) and *(b)* officials of his Department have had (i) meetings, (ii) discussions and (iii) correspondence with representatives of RM since his appointment; and if he will make a statement. [29330]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: I can confirm that neither my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State nor I have held any meetings or discussions, and have not exchanged any correspondence with Research Machines (RM). However, officials within this Department have met with RM on numerous occasions since May 2010 and have sent RM one letter during that time.

Departmental officials leading on OPEN—The Marketplace for Schools:

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/open

have met with RM to take forward the integration of Research Machines with the OPEN suite of products. Meetings between RM and this Department have been regular weekly project meetings to look closely at timescales and the project milestones. 16 meetings have taken place since May 2010.

One letter, dated 25 October 2010, was sent to RM to explain that continuance of the OPEN e-marketplace for schools is under review.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28118]

Tim Loughton: The Department will fully comply with the package of support to open up Government procurement to help small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations recently announced by the Cabinet Office.

This includes streamlining the procurement process to remove unnecessary bureaucracy and waste, improving the transparency of public procurement opportunities and ensuring the timely payment by contractors to sub-contractors.

In addition to those measures the Department already: advertises all suitable contracts on the supply2gov website (a website aimed at SMEs), flags up any contract advert placed in the Official Journal of the European Union if there may be sub-contracting opportunities for SMEs, uses simplified contractual documentation, encourages innovation through output based specifications, splitting requirements into smaller lots, encourages the use of consortia, publicises tender documents on the Business Link website and supports new businesses through flexibility on qualifying documentation, eg financial accounts.

Departmental Early Retirement

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many staff of *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies have been offered enhanced early retirement packages in each of the last three years. [22023]

Tim Loughton: Under the Civil Service Compensation scheme the Department can offer early retirement packages in circumstances prescribed by the Civil Service Management Code. Information on the number of departmental staff who received approved early release package for the last three full financial years is set out in the following table:

	Flexible and compulsory early retirement	*Approved early retirement*
2007-08	55	3
2008-09	37	1
2009-10	94	—

The Department has no agencies.

Departmental Training

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many external training courses were attended by staff of his Department in the last 12 months; and what the cost to the public purse was of each such course. [13278]

Tim Loughton: Information about how many external training courses were attended by the Department's staff and associated costs is not held centrally—funding for the majority of learning and development opportunities is held and managed by individual business areas. Consequently this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Education Psychology

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education when he expects the freeze on the recruitment of trainee education psychologists to end. [29235]

Sarah Teather *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: I am very pleased to report that following our spending review I have been able to secure the funding that will enable the 2011 training cohort to go ahead. My hon. Friend will appreciate that this is only a temporary solution because the current funding scheme is not sustainable. I am determined to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the Green Paper on special educational needs and disabilities to consider options for placing the training of educational psychologists on a more secure footing.

Family Law: Adoption

Mr Burley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of variation in the practice and implementation of adoption law across England and Wales. [23956]

Tim Loughton: The latest national adoption figures show a disappointing fall in the number of children being adopted and also a significant variation in local authorities' performance, both in terms of the number of looked after children who are adopted and in the timeliness of placements.

The 'Adoption Research Initiative' has also highlighted variations in local practice, particularly in relation to permanence planning and decision making, family finding and matching, the provision of adoption support services, the use of resources and the allocation of budgets.

I want all local authorities to perform to the level of the best. That is why I have set up a Ministerial Advisory Group on Adoption to provide expert advice on a range of practical proposals to remove barriers and reduce delays.

On 18 November I wrote to directors of children's services and lead members to ask that they do everything possible to increase the number of children appropriately placed for adoption and to improve the speed with which decisions are made. I also intend to issue, in January, revised statutory guidance on adoption.

Institute for Fiscal Studies

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 728W, on the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), which contracts his Department had with the IFS between 2002-03 and 2010-11; what the monetary value was of each such contract; and what tender process was undertaken in each case. [28826]

Tim Loughton: DfE contracts with the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) are research contracts and shown in the following table are details of contracts for the period 2002 to 2011. All of these contracts were awarded by competitive tender.

Reference	*Project title*	*Contract period*	*Tender process*	*Monetary value of the contract (£)*
2002027	Evaluation of pilots of paid time off for training-design stage	2 April 2002 – 25 October 2002	Competitive	39,710.00
2002084	Parental background and child outcomes: how much does money matter and what else matters?	1 October 2002 – 31 May 2005	Competitive	253,834.75
2003087	Design study for research on the impact of level 2 learning and qualifications	5 June 2003 – 7 July 2003	Competitive	16,550.00
2007107	Drivers and barriers to educational success, evidence from the longitudinal survey of young people in England	6 March 2008 – 31 March 2009	Competitive	84,370.00
2009161	Centre for analysis of youth transitions research centre	15 January 2010 – 31 March 2014	Competitive	Up to 2,000,000.00
2008058	LSYPE-YCS-IFS framework agreement for analysis of longitudinal data sets[1]	30 November 2008 – 30 April 2011	Competitive	[1]0.00

[1] To date no work has been awarded to IFS under this framework agreement.

Members: Correspondence

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Education when he plans to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Torbay of 1 September 2010, on his constituent Mrs Greenwood. [26116]

Tim Loughton: The Minister of State, my hon. Friend the Member for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton (Mr Gibb) for Schools responded to the letter from the hon. Member on 7 December.

Overseas Students: Guardianship

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what consideration he has given to the merits of reviewing the safeguarding requirements for those providing education guardianship and host family services to overseas students. [27819]

Tim Loughton: There are no plans to review specifically the current arrangements for those providing education guardianship and host family services to overseas students. The Government are, however, currently reviewing the criminal records and vetting and barring regime, with the intention of scaling it back to common-sense levels.

School Linking Network Programme

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the School Linking Network project, and what plans he has to review the operation of that project. [26483]

Mr Gibb: In 2009 DfE commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research to conduct an evaluation of the Schools Linking Network (SLN) programme. The evaluation involved in-depth case study visits with participating schools to collect evidence on the take up and delivery of the programme, taking into account the views of school leaders, teachers, and local authorities. The evaluation also includes a robust assessment of the impact of the programme on pupils' attitudes and behaviour, using a quantitative survey of secondary pupils to compare changes over time in the attitudes and behaviour of SLN participants against a comparable group of non-participants. A full report on the evaluation findings will be published in early 2011. No decision has yet been taken on whether to continue funding SLN in future years.

Schools: Religion

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of his Department's Interfaith School

Linking Network Project; when he next plans to renew the Project's performance; and if he will make a statement. [27545]

Mr Gibb: In 2009 DfE commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research to conduct an evaluation of the Schools Linking Network (SLN) programme. The evaluation involves in-depth case study visits with participating schools to collect evidence on the take up and delivery of the programme, taking into account the views of school leaders, teachers, and local authorities. The evaluation also includes a robust assessment of the impact of the programme on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The evaluation covers school linking on the basis of racial, socio-economic, or faith differences, and does not specifically focus on the interfaith aspect of the School Linking Network's work. The Department currently has no plans to conduct a separate evaluation of Interfaith School Linking. A full report on the current evaluation findings will be published in early 2011.

Teachers: Languages

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has for the future of the British Council Language Teaching Assistant scheme. [30269]

Mr Gibb: The Language Assistants programme, which is managed for the Department by the British Council, will continue. The programme supports departmental and Government priorities by exposing pupils in our schools to mother-tongue speakers of other languages through the intake of foreign language assistants; and provides an opportunity for undergraduates from our universities to immerse themselves in a foreign language while working as an English language assistant in a school abroad.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 15 December 2010

SCOTLAND

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31216]

David Mundell: All staff working within the Scotland Office are paid at a rate above the London living wage.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31178]

David Mundell: Following the spending review settlement for the Scotland Office, detailed plans, on which such estimates would be based, are being developed and finalised. The increase in the standard rate of value added tax is only one of many factors which is being taken into account. Therefore, we are not in a position to say what effect that one factor will have on our annual expenditure.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Carbon Emissions

Mr Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the level of UK carbon dioxide emissions in each year from 1980 to 2010; and if he will make a statement. [30656]

Gregory Barker: DECC published estimates of UK greenhouse gas emissions, including carbon dioxide, as National Statistics on 2 February 2010. These can be found on the DECC website at the following link.

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/climate_change/gg_emissions/ukemissions/2008 final/2008 final.aspx

The following table shows estimated UK carbon dioxide emissions for each year from 1980 to 2009 inclusive. Note that the 2009 estimates are provisional. We do not currently have estimates of carbon dioxide emissions for 2010.

UK carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions, 1980 to 2009

	CO_2 emissions (Mt)
1980	608.5
1981	583.7
1982	575.0
1983	568.5
1984	552.2
1985	571.7
1986	585.1
1987	591.2
1988	591.3
1989	580.8
1990	592.8
1991	600.2
1992	582.9
1993	567.9
1994	561.8
1995	553.1
1996	575.3
1997	551.5
1998	553.6
1999	543.1
2000	551.2
2001	562.6
2002	545.0
2003	556.7
2004	556.3
2005	553.9
2006	551.4
2007	543.6
2008	532.8
2009	[1]480.9

[1] Provisional

Additional data on UK carbon dioxide emissions can be found at the following link:

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/climate_change/data/data.aspx

Domestic Properties: Heating

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent estimate he has made of the number of domestic properties which are heated by (*a*) air source and (*b*) ground source heat pumps. [29501]

Gregory Barker: According to recent industry figures, the estimate of heat pumps installed in domestic properties in each of the last three years is as follows:

Heat pumps	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
Ground	2,856	1,626	1,465
Air source	2,700	5,850	7,605
Exhaust	1,300	4,350	5,873
Total residential	6,856	11,826	14,943

Energy Supply: Security

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent steps his Department has taken to increase the security of the UK's energy supplies; and if he will make a statement. [30310]

Gregory Barker: The Department published the Statutory Security of Supply report early this year, at the beginning of November, in order to give timely and credible information to the market ahead of the winter.

The Energy Bill, introduced to the House of Lords on 8 December, includes measures to reduce the likelihood, duration and severity of a gas supply emergency. These measures would give Ofgem new powers to strengthen the commercial incentives on gas market participants to meet their contractual supply obligations during a gas supply emergency. In turn this should sharpen incentives to avoid a gas supply emergency and help underpin commercial demand for additional gas supply infrastructure, including storage facilities.

The Bill also consolidates and improves the current legislation on third party access to upstream oil and gas infrastructure. This will help the exploitation of smaller and more difficult oil and gas fields, and assist in making the most of our natural resources.

The Government are implementing the EU Security of Gas Supply Regulation in order to help improve EU security of supply, with knock on benefits for the UK.

The Government are undertaking the Electricity Market Reform Project to design and deliver a new market framework that will allow for efficient, cost-effective, large scale investment in low carbon energy and protect UK security of supply. The Project will issue a consultation shortly.

The draft National Policy Statements (NPS), published on 18 October for consultation, provide a clear platform for energy companies to bring forward planning applications within fixed timeframes, to avoid the delays which have been such a problem in the past.

Improving energy efficiency is part of improving our energy security. The Green Deal (announced as part of the Energy Bill) will provide household and business energy efficiency improvements at no up-front cost, with consumers repaying through the savings they make on their energy bills.

Green Deal

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what assessment he has made of the likely effect of over- or under-estimating household energy use before improvements under the Green Deal on the level of fuel bills once such improvements have been made. [30651]

Gregory Barker: DECC continues to publish research on how 'real life' energy savings compare with estimated ones, covering areas such as cavity wall insulation, loft insulation and condensing boiler efficiency:

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/consumers/saving_energy/analysis/analysis.aspx

Quantitative research is currently being carried out to examine the before and after gas consumption in relation to a variety of property types that have had cavities filled and lofts insulated during recent years, and how these compare to control groups. Findings from this research will be published next year.

We are reviewing how best to design the assessment at the beginning of the Green Deal to enable the savings estimates to be as accurate as possible.

Hydraulic Fracturing

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what his policy is on the use of hydraulic fracturing by the oil and gas industry; and what discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on regulation of the use of hydraulic fracturing. [29560]

Gregory Barker: Hydraulic fracturing has long been used to increase the productivity of oil and gas fields and, more recently, of shale gas reservoirs, where the rock has low natural permeability. The Department has no objection to the use of this technique so long as all of the relevant environmental and planning assessments have been carried out and permissions granted. I have had no discussions with my EU counterparts on the regulation of the use of hydraulic fracturing.

Insulation: Housing

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many homes received loft insulation at no cost to the homeowner in each year since 2005. [30437]

Gregory Barker: The following table shows the number of loft insulations installed under the Warm Front Scheme since 2005:

	Loft insulation
2005-06	55,755
2006-07	60,907
2007-08	58,580
2008-09	57,104
2009-10	39,764
2010-11[1]	11,688
Total	283,798

[1] Up to 30 November 2010.

Under energy supplier obligations, suppliers have generally provided 100% subsidy to the most vulnerable households. The exact number of installations in these households is only currently reported at the end of the scheme. Just under 1.8 million vulnerable 'Priority Group' households received professional loft insulation between April 2005 and March 2008 under the Energy Efficiency commitment. Between April 2008 and September 2010, approximately 1.75 million households have received loft insulation under the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT). 40% of carbon savings under CERT must be achieved in vulnerable 'Priority Group' households.

Mr Buckland: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will take steps to ensure that poorly-insulated private rented housing is insulated to an appropriate standard prior to improvements scheduled for after 2016. [30858]

Gregory Barker: The Green Deal will offer a range of innovative finance packages allowing landlords to install energy efficiency measures in their rental properties at no upfront cost to themselves.

However, we are also seeking powers in the Energy Bill that would require landlords to make reasonable energy efficiency improvements to poorly-insulated properties from 2015.

These powers will only be used if we do not see voluntary improvement under the forthcoming Green Deal.

Nuclear Power

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty with respect to peaceful uses of nuclear energy; and if he will make a statement. [30311]

Gregory Barker: The Department played a key role in the deliberations on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the lead up to, and during, the Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) held earlier this year. Ensuring that the Treaty continues to be effective, set against the growing worldwide interest in nuclear energy and other developments, was a central objective of these discussions, and was reflected in the agreed outcome document, to which all parties are bound. Since the Review Conference my Department has taken part in cross-Whitehall work to guide and influence future direction of the 'peaceful uses' pillar of the NPT.

Offshore Industry: Renewable energy

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent assessment he has made of the likelihood of attracting private sector funding for offshore renewable energy projects. [30362]

Gregory Barker: The Government will publish a consultation document on electricity market reform this month, followed by a White Paper in spring 2011. One of the key objectives of the EMR project is to ensure we have the right framework to attract investment into low carbon infrastructure so we can achieve our energy goals. This means ensuring sufficient returns, at manageable cost to the consumer, to stimulate the necessary investment into low carbon technologies, including offshore renewables.

Following the allocation of £1 billion of new funding for the establishment of a Green Investment Bank announced in the spending review, Government are currently considering various options as to the purpose and structure of the bank. As part of the next phase of work we are considering how the GIB could tackle risks that the market currently cannot adequately finance, and how to facilitate the entrance of new types of investors into green infrastructure in order to reduce the financing gap. This work will include consideration of offshore wind.

Further, following our commitment to allocate up to £60 million for offshore wind infrastructure at port locations, Siemens, GE and Gamesa announced their intentions to establish manufacturing plants at coastal locations in the UK, with Gamesa also announcing that they will be opening a research and development facility and their global headquarters in London.

Oil

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (1) what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of arrangements for meeting the Government's strategic oil stocking obligations under International Energy Agency and EU rules; [30837]

(2) what assessment he has made of the likely effects of decreases in the level of North Sea oil production on the fulfilment of the Government's strategic oil stocking obligations under International Energy Agency and EU rules; [30838]

(3) what information he holds for benchmarking purposes on the EU member states which have an independent oil-stocking agency under International Energy Agency and EU rules; and if he will make a statement; [30839]

(4) what discussions (*a*) Ministers and (*b*) officials in his Department had with representatives of the oil industry since May 2010 on possible changes to the system for meeting the Government's strategic oil stocking obligations; [30840]

(5) whether (*a*) Ministers and (*b*) officials in his Department have had discussions with representatives of the oil industry since May 2010 on the establishment of an independent oil-stocking agency in the UK under International Energy Agency and EU rules; and if he will make a statement. [30841]

Gregory Barker: The UK has international obligations to hold emergency oil stocks for use in global oil supply disruptions that it meets by directing industry to hold stocks under powers in the Energy Act 1976.

Currently, the UK is fully compliant with its international obligations, holding 13.6 million tonnes (MT) in September (the latest month for which data are available) against an EU obligation of 10.4 MT and an IEA obligation of 1.6 MT. Declining UK crude oil production will lead to an increase in the overall UK stockholding obligation. While there is uncertainty over the precise timing, the latest forecasts suggest that there will not be a net increase in the overall UK obligation until around 2018.

We have set up up a joint project with industry stakeholders to review the current policy and explore alternative options including the possibility of oil stockholding agency models. Via the IEA, the UK has access to information on different agency models adopted by EU and IEA countries.

Since May 2010, DECC Ministers have met with representatives from the downstream oil industry on a number of occasions; these discussions have ranged widely but have included oil stocking policy. There have been a number of meetings between officials and industry that have focused on oil stocking policy.

Renewable Energy: Social Rented Housing

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what proportion of social housing units have solar panels. [30436]

Gregory Barker: The Department does not hold information on the number of social housing buildings that have installed solar photovoltaic panels.

Renewable Heat Incentive

Mr Robin Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps his Department plans to take to introduce the Renewable Heat Incentive from 2011-12 onwards. [29596]

Gregory Barker: We expect to be in a position to announce the details of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme shortly and to be open for business in 2011.

Rocky Mountain Institute

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what matters were discussed in his recent meeting with Amory Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute; and whether Mr Lovins made documentation available to him and his officials. [30453]

Gregory Barker: I hosted a meeting with Amory Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute on the morning of 22 November. He discussed a range of issues on energy and energy efficiency; topics covered included the role of distributed energy and potential for energy efficiency.

Mr Lovins provided me with a number of his publicly available, published works on the above topics.

Solar Power: Construction

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many new residential properties had solar panels included in their construction in *(a)* 2005, *(b)* 2006, *(c)* 2007, *(d)* 2008 and *(e)* 2009. [29942]

Charles Hendry: The Department does not hold information on the overall number of new build residential properties with solar panels. These works are carried out by private contractors who have no obligation to inform the Government.

Under previous Government grant programmes—Major Demonstration Photovoltaic and Low Carbon Buildings programmes during 2005-09—the following numbers of solar photovoltaic panels projects for new build residential properties were supported.

Number of projects

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*Total*
Major PV Demonstration programme	38	37	34	0	0	109
Low Carbon Buildings programme	0	0	1	24	42	67
TOTAL	38	37	35	24	42	176

Value of projects

						£
	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*Total*
Major PV Demonstration programme	294,062	288,350	226,277	0	0	808,689
Low Carbon Buildings programme	0	0	2,500	5,640	101,500	109,640
Total	294,062	288,350	228,777	5,640	101,500	918,329

Warm Front Grants

Jeremy Lefroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many applications for Warm Front grants are outstanding; and how long on average it took from application for a grant to installation of equipment in the latest period for which figures are available. [30670]

Gregory Barker: As of 3 December, there were 18,990 outstanding applications to Warm Front. In 2009-10, the average waiting time for an insulation measure was 48.6 working days and for a heating measure it was 75.5 working days.

Wind Power: Construction

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many new non-residential properties had wind turbines included in their construction in *(a)* 2005, *(b)* 2006, *(c)* 2007, *(d)* 2008 and *(e)* 2009. [29941]

Charles Hendry: The Department does not hold information on the overall number of new non residential properties which installed wind turbines.

Under the previous "Low Carbon Buildings Programme" (2006-10), the following grants were made for micro and small wind turbines installed on new build non residential properties:

	Value of grants paid (£)	*Number of grants paid*
2007	8,284	1
2008	42,817	3
2009	171,927	12
2010	173,147	8
Total	396,175	24

Winter Fuel Payments

Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the proportion of recipients of winter fuel payments who are fuel-poor. [31113]

Gregory Barker: In 2008 around 22% of households containing someone eligible (i.e. aged 60 and over) for a winter fuel payment in England were classified as being in fuel poverty.

HEALTH

Cancer: Drugs

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria will be used to assess appropriateness of proposals to fund a treatment from the Cancer Drugs Fund; and whether an advisory board will be established to determine those criteria. [30793]

Mr Simon Burns: We have published for consultation our proposals for arrangements for the Cancer Drugs Fund which will operate from April 2011 in "The

Cancer Drugs Fund: A Consultation". We want health professionals, patients, carers industry and the public to give us their comments on these proposals which can be accessed at:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_120834

A copy has already been placed in the Library.

Complementary Medicine: Regulation

Michael Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Morecambe and Lunesdale (David Morris) of 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 78-9W, on complementary medicine: regulation, when he expects to make an announcement on a statutory register for herbal medicine practitioners. [30825]

Anne Milton: Once the Government, together with the devolved Administrations, reach a decision on how best to take this work forward we will make an announcement.

Diabetes: Leicester

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Leicester East constituency were diagnosed with diabetes in each of the last five years. [30449]

Paul Burstow: The national quality and outcomes framework (QOF) records the number of people, aged 17 or over, recorded on practice disease registers with a diagnosis of diabetes. The register is not a count of patients newly diagnosed with the disease within each year but rather a count of patients with the disease on a specific day within the year. This register count is available for the releases of QOF covering financial years 2005-06 through to 2009-10.

QOF information is collated by primary care trust (PCT). Information for 2006-07 to 2009-10 has been provided for Leicester City PCT, which covers the Leicester East constituency. Information for 2005-06 is provided for Eastern Leicester and Leicester City West PCTs, which merged to form Leicester City PCT in October 2006.

The number of patients aged 17 or over with diabetes from the registers are given in the following tables.

Table 1: Leicester City PCT

Financial year	*Number of patients*
2009-10	18,998
2008-09	17,959
2007-08	17,152
2006-07	16,507

Table 2: Eastern Leicester and Leicester City West PCTs combined

2005-06 financial year	*Number of patients*
Eastern Leicester PCT	10,462
Leicester City West PCT	5,757
Combined total	16,219

Notes:

1. Diabetes register — This will include patients aged 17 years and over with diabetes mellitus. (As the care of children with diabetes mellitus is generally under the control of specialists, the register should exclude those patients age 16 and under).
2. QOF — the national Quality and Outcomes Framework, introduced as part of the new General Medical Services (GMS) contract on 1 April 2004.
3. Participation by practices in the QOF is voluntary, though participation rates are very high, with most Personal Medical Services (PMS) practices also taking part.
4. The published QOF information was derived from the Quality Management Analysis System (QMAS), a national system developed by NHS Connecting for Health.
5. QMAS uses data from general practices to calculate individual practices' QOF achievement. QMAS is a national information technology system developed by NHS Connecting for Health to support the QOF.
6. The QMAS captures the number of patients on the various disease registers for each practice. The number of patients on the clinical registers can be used to calculate measures of disease prevalence, expressing the number of patients on each register as a percentage of the number of patients on practices' lists.

Source:

The Information Centre for health and social care: Diabetes register

Drugs Treatment: Finance

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which primary care trusts fund drug treatment services that include *(a)* needle exchange, *(b)* clinical wound care, *(c)* tests for blood-borne viruses and *(d)* immunisation programmes for injecting drug users. [30463]

Anne Milton: This information requested is not collected centrally. These services are available in all parts of the country for those for whom they are clinically justified, provided either through generic services or drug treatment services.

Drugs Treatment: Public Finance

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse per quality adjusted life year for each drug with UK patient numbers of fewer than 500 which was approved by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in the last five years. [30794]

Mr Simon Burns: We have made no such estimate.

When issuing final technology appraisal guidance to the national health service, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence publishes costing templates, to support NHS organisations in estimating the local cost of implementing its guidance.

Hospitals: Admissions

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many emergency bed days there were following hospital *(a)* admission and *(b)* readmission for acute myocardial infarction in (i) each primary care trust and (ii) England in each of the last 10 years; [30711]

(2) how many readmissions to hospital there within 28 days of discharge for hospital patients originally admitted for acute myocardial infarction in *(a)* each primary care trust and *(b)* England in each of the last 10 years; [30713]

(3) how many hospital *(a)* admissions and *(b)* emergency admissions there were for acute myocardial infarction in (i) each primary care trust and (ii) England in each of the last five years; [30714]

Mr Simon Burns: A table showing admissions, emergency admissions and emergency bed days with a primary diagnosis of a heart attack by primary care trust (PCT) of residence and England from 2000-01 to 2009-10 has been placed in the Library.

Information on re-admissions is not held centrally.

Medical Treatments Abroad: EU Countries

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the ability of *(a)* men and *(b)* women of state pension age to access health care in other EU member states through the E121 scheme; what recent representations he has received on the compatibility of the scheme with UK equalities legislation; and if he will make a statement. [30403]

Anne Milton: Under EC Regulation 883/2004, which replaced EC Regulation 1408/71 from 1 May 2010, individuals of state pension age from one member state are able to access state provided health care on the same terms as citizens of another EU member state should they decide to take up residency there. The S1 form replaced the E121 form from 1 May 2010.

We are not aware of any recent representation on this matter.

NHS: Reorganisation

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his most recent estimate is of the likely cost to the public purse of the reorganisation of the NHS under the proposals in his Department's White Paper on Equity and excellence: liberating the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [30932]

Mr Simon Burns: The White Paper 'Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS' laid out proposals for fundamental changes to the ways that the national health service is structured and run, including for the structures of primary care trusts, strategic health authorities and the Department. The precise costs of the transition to the new system will not be known until the new organisations that will underpin the new system have been designed in more detail.

The results of a number of consultations on how the new organisations should be designed are currently being analysed. Once the results of these are known we will publish the costs of the new system in an impact assessment.

NHS: Standards

Mr Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS targets have been removed since May 2010; and if he will make a statement. [30657]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department removed three national health service targets from the 2010-11 performance regime on 21 June 2010:

1. Guaranteed access to a primary care professional within 24 hours and to a primary care doctor within 48 hours.
2. Percentage of patients seen within 18 weeks for admitted and non-admitted pathways.
3. Patient experience of access to primary care.

The four-hour maximum wait in Accident and Emergency has been retained with a change to a lower threshold of 95%.

This information is contained in the 'Revision to the Operating Framework for the NHS in England 2010-11' (DEP2010-1328), which has already been placed in the Library.

Osteoporosis: Health Services

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will extend the osteoporosis directed enhanced service to 2011-12. [30846]

Paul Burstow: The osteoporosis Directed Enhanced Service is part of the current national General Practice contract negotiations between the General Practitioners Committee of the British Medical Association and NHS Employers. Discussions on contractual arrangements to apply from April 2011 are ongoing.

Social Services: Public Expenditure

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the likely effect of the outcome of the comprehensive spending review on social care services provided for older people in Birmingham, Ladywood constituency; and if he will make a statement. [31124]

Paul Burstow: The spending review recognises the importance of social care in protecting most vulnerable in society. In recognition of the pressures on the social care system in a challenging local government settlement, the coalition Government have allocated an additional £2 billion by 2014-15 to support the delivery of social care. This means, with an ambitious programme of efficiency, that there is enough funding available both to protect people's access to services and deliver new approaches to improve quality and outcomes.

We have achieved this in two ways:

The national health service will transfer some funding from the health capital budget to health revenue, to be spent on measures that support social care, which also benefits health. This funding will rise to £1 billion in 2014-15, and will promote improved joint working between the health and social care systems. The new NHS Operating Framework will set out specific primary care trust (PCT) allocations that they will transfer to local authorities for spending on social care services to benefit health, and to improve overall health gain. PCTs and local authorities will need to work together to agree jointly appropriate areas for social care investment, with a shared analysis of need and a common agreement on the outcomes to be met. Next year, this funding will be worth £15.4 million to Birmingham city council.

Additional grant funding, rising to £1 billion by 2014-15, will be made available for social care. This funding will be allocated in addition to the Department's existing social care grants, which will rise in line with inflation. Total grant funding from the Department for social care will reach £2 4 billion by 2014-15. In order to support local flexibility and to reduce administrative burdens, this funding will go to authorities through the Revenue Support Grant.

Decisions on funding for adult social care are a matter for Birmingham city council, and will depend on local needs and priorities.

Tuberculosis: Health Services

Mr Virendra Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to improve the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis among the non-UK born population. [30645]

Anne Milton: The Department plans to take a new approach to public health, with more effective national and local systems for tackling key public health challenges, such as tuberculosis (TB).

In addition, the Department will continue to support TB Alert in 2011-12 in raising awareness among people at risk of TB, including those born outside the United Kingdom, to increase referrals for TB testing and ensure prompt and effective treatment is provided.

Vaccination: Influenza

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the original purchase cost was of the antivirals and vaccines which were unused during the 2009-10 flu pandemic; and what the cost to the public purse was of disposing of such drugs. [31274]

Anne Milton: The original purchase price of the antivirals and H1N1 vaccine is commercially confidential. The vast majority of the antiviral drugs are still within their shelf lives. Some of the H1N1 vaccine will have reached its shelf life by the end of this year with the remainder expiring in 2011-12. To date we have not disposed of any material quantities of antivirals or H1N1 vaccines.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Addison Lee

Julie Elliott: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the public bodies for which it is responsible contract services from Addison Lee private hire taxi company. [30703]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has a contract with Addison Lee, part of the Department for Work and Pensions National Framework for Taxi Services.

FCO Services, the Executive Agency of the FCO do not have a separate contract with Addison Lee but will sometimes use Addison Lee under the FCO agreement.

The British Council, Wilton Park, the Great Britain-China Centre (GBCC) and the BBC World Service do not have a contract with Addison Lee.

Colombia: Politics and Government

Jim McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Colombian government on the disappearance of Pastor William Reyes; and if he will make further representations on that case. [30955]

Mr Jeremy Browne: Our most recent intervention was on 17 November 2010. Our ambassador to Colombia made representations to the Director of the Colombian Presidential Programme for Human Rights and the Colombian Prosecutor's Office, requesting an update on the progress of the investigation into the disappearance of Pastor William Reyes. We will continue to monitor the investigation and seek updates from Colombian authorities.

We regularly raise our human rights concerns with the Colombian authorities both in Colombia and here in the UK.

Human Rights

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received on human rights violations overseas; and if he will make a statement. [30317]

Mr Jeremy Browne: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Ministers and officials receive representations on human rights violations overseas on a regular basis. Where possible the Foreign Secretary, Ministers and officials meet with those making the representations. For example, the Foreign Secretary met with Amnesty International in October. Most recently he met with his new Human Rights Advisory Group where they discussed a wide range of human rights issues relating to conflict, counter-terrorism, and religious freedom, as well as specific countries of concern and broader strategic trends. As Minister with responsibility for human rights policy, I met with Open Doors earlier this month to receive a petition against the UN Defamation of Religions Resolution.

The FCO's overseas missions receive information on human rights, including allegations of abuse, from a wide variety of sources. These include local non-governmental organisations, human rights defenders and local media. Our missions use this information in their assessment of the local human rights situation, and raise allegations of human rights abuses with host governments on a case-by-case basis. We do not centrally hold information on all representations received on human rights violations. To provide this information an FCO-wide search would be required which would incur disproportionate cost.

Human rights reporting is key to our work to promote and protect human rights around the world. The FCO will publish a command paper in spring 2011 which will detail our human rights work around the world and our assessment of the human rights situation in a number of countries.

Middle East: Armed Conflict

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports his Department has received on the number of rocket and mortar attacks on Israel *(a)* in 2010, *(b)* since 2005 and *(c)* since 2000; and if he will make a statement. [29426]

Alistair Burt: According to the Israel Defence Force (IDF) as of 7 October, 165 rockets and mortars were fired at Israel in 2010. The IDF do not publish records prior to 2002. Since then a total of 11,293 rockets have been fired at Israel, of which 7,778 have been since 2005. The IDF note that at current levels 2010 is set to be the year with the lowest number of rocket attacks since 2002. This is small comfort to those at the receiving end and we continue to condemn all rocket attacks. Such acts of terrorism are indiscriminate and frequently target civilian populations. We call on all sides to halt acts of violence and focus efforts on a negotiated solution.

Middle East: Overseas Aid

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made on implementation of support for projects in Israel and the Occupied Territories which have already received approval in principle for funding from the Conflict Pool. [30199]

Alistair Burt: A total of £4.1 million was earmarked from the 2010-11 Middle East and North Africa Conflict Pool for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The majority of the allocation is used to support the British Support Team (BST) working principally on security sector reform within the Palestinian Authority under the umbrella of the of the United States Security Coordinator, and the UK contribution to the EU Police Co-ordinating office for Palestinian Police Support (EUPOL COPPS) programme. The remainder was available to support short term projects led by Israeli and Palestinian non-governmental organisations. By September 2010 the Conflict Pool had agreed funding for 12 non-governmental organisations which amounted to 85% of the available funding. Unallocated funds for the remainder of the year are currently being reviewed. No new spending will be allocated until after the full implications of the review are known. This is unlikely to be before the end of this financial year.

Mongolia: Paralympic Games 2012

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the British Ambassador to Mongolia has had with representatives of the Mongolian Paralympic team on the adequacy of the wheelchairs available to members of the team in meeting the qualifying standard for the London 2012 Paralympics; and if he will make a statement. [30510]

Mr Jeremy Browne: Our ambassador in Mongolia has had no discussions with representatives of the Mongolian Paralympic team.

The Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia, Miyegombo Enkhbold, visited the UK on 19 October and met the Minister for Sport and the Olympics, where they discussed the London 2012 Olympics.

Sri Lanka

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has discussed with the Sri Lankan President the establishment an independent review of events during the civil war in Sri Lanka. [30456]

Alistair Burt: We regularly raise with the Government of Sri Lanka the need for a credible and independent process to look into possible violations of international humanitarian law by both sides during the conflict. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary did not meet the Sri Lankan President during his recent visit to the UK, but was able to stress the need for such a process when he met the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister on 20 October. Our high commissioner in Colombo regularly raises this issue with senior members of the Sri Lankan Government, most recently with the Foreign Minister on 8 December.

St Vincent and the Grenadines: Elections

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from representatives of political parties in St Vincent and the Grenadines on the conduct of their forthcoming general election. [30726]

Mr Jeremy Browne: Our high commissioner to the Eastern Caribbean and the resident commissioner in St Lucia (with lead responsibility for St Vincent and the Grenadines) have been in regular contact with leaders of both main political parties in St Vincent and the Grenadines over recent months. Our high commissioner to the Eastern Caribbean and the Head of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Caribbean Team met the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition in St Vincent and the Grenadines on 24 November, and also called on the Supervisor of Elections and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry responsible for election arrangements. They were briefed on preparations and procedures in place for the elections and they emphasised the importance of free and fair elections.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will take steps to ensure that the forthcoming election in St Vincent and the Grenadines is monitored by independent election scrutineers. [30829]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The general election in St Vincent and the Grenadines will be independently monitored by election observation teams from the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM). Representatives from our high commission, the US embassy, the Canadian high commission and the European Commission will also be in St Vincent and the Grenadines to monitor the electoral process. Domestic monitors will also be covering the election.

Our high commissioner to the Eastern Caribbean and the Head of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Caribbean Team called on the Supervisor of Elections and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry responsible for election arrangements on 24 November. They were briefed on preparations and procedures in place for the elections and they took the opportunity to emphasise the importance of free and fair elections, including independent monitoring.

Western Sahara: Politics and Government

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information the Government in their capacity as a permanent member of the UN Licensing Council have been given on the number of people *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured during the recent Polisario demonstrations in Laayoune. [30490]

Alistair Burt: The UN Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) has said that between nine and eleven Moroccan security personnel were killed in the operation to dismantle the protest camps and that two civilians were also killed in related disturbances in Laayoune. They have also reported that there were a number of injuries on both sides.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the Government in their capacity as a permanent member of the UN Security Council have had with the Government of Algeria on its sponsorship of the Polisario Front. [30491]

Alistair Burt: We have not had any specific discussions with the Algerian Government regarding sponsorship of the Polisario Front. However, during my visit to Algeria in November I discussed with Mr Abdelkader Messahel, the Algerian Minister for Maghrebian and African Affairs, the situation in Western Sahara and how both our countries could support progress. I also re-emphasised our support for Christopher Ross and our call on both parties to enter into negotiations in good faith and without preconditions.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government have taken in their capacity as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to assist the UN Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara; and if he will make a statement. [30492]

Alistair Burt: The UK continues to support the UN Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The UK contributes to the funding of MINURSO through our assessed costs to all UN peacekeeping missions. In 2010-11 the UK contributed £2.8 million to the UN budget for MINURSO. While President of the UN Security Council in November, we provided a platform for the Head of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations to relay its assessment of the recent events in Western Sahara to the UN Security Council.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information the Government have received in their capacity as a permanent member of the UN Security Council on the *(a)* activities, *(b)* identities and *(c)* nationalities of the political activists involved in inciting unrest during recent peaceful demonstrations in Laayoune. [R] [30493]

Alistair Burt: The UN Security Council met on 16 November 2010 to discuss events surrounding the recent demonstrations in Laayounne. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council but were unable to provide any information on the activities, identities or nationalities of the demonstrators.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made through the UN Security Council on the treatment of women and children taken hostage during recent peaceful demonstrations in Laayoune. [R] [30494]

Alistair Burt: Reports of women and children being taken hostage in Laayounne have not been independently corroborated. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has therefore not made any representations through the UN Security Council on this issue.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports his Department has received on the *(a)* destinations and *(b)* activities of young people permitted to leave the Tindouf refugee camps for educational purposes. [R] [30495]

Alistair Burt: We have been told by inhabitants of the camps that there are established educational programmes with various countries including Spain and Cuba.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on links between the Polisario Front, al-Qaeda in the Maghreb and the Tindouf refugee camps. [R] [30496]

Alistair Burt: We have not received any reports suggesting a link between the Polisario Front or the Tindouf refugee camps and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence was presented to the UN Security Council during the UK Presidency of the Council on the status of Omar Sid-Ahmed Ould Hamma, alias Omar the Sahrawi as a *(a)* member of al-Qaeda in the Maghreb and *(b)* security official in the Polisario Front. [30497]

Alistair Burt: No information on Omar Sid-Ahmed Ould Hamma was provided to the UN Security Council during the UK's Presidency.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence has been presented to the UN Security Council on each date during the UK Presidency on a link between the Polisario Front and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. [30498]

Alistair Burt: No evidence was presented to the UN Security Council during the UK Presidency on a link between the Polisario Front and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence has been presented to the UN Security Council during the UK Presidency of the Council on the indoctrination of young people in the Tindouf refugee camps in Algeria. [30499]

Alistair Burt: No evidence was presented to the UN Security Council during the UK Presidency of the Council on the indoctrination of young people in the Tindouf refugee camps in Algiers.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what meetings his Department has had with his counterparts in *(a)* Morocco, *(b)* Spain, *(c)* France, *(d)* Algeria, *(e)* Mali and *(f)* Mauritania to discuss the activities of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb on each date since 2008; and who the attendees were of each such meeting. [30500]

Alistair Burt: Previous visits by Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers since 2008 include:

Algeria

November 2008

The hon. former Member for Harlow, (Bill Rammell).

Morocco and Mali

November 2009

The hon. Member for Bury South (Mr Lewis).

Morocco

June 2009

The hon. former Member for Harlow, (Bill Rammell)

Mali

December 2009

The hon. Member for Bury South (Mr Lewis).

As Minister with responsibility for our relations with Morocco and Algeria, I have made visits to both countries in November 2010.

As Ministers and senior officials continue to have regular meetings with their counterparts on this sensitive issue, naming these counterparts would not be appropriate in this circumstance.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received of links between Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and UK *(a)* nationals and *(b)* residents; and if he will make a statement. [30501]

Alistair Burt: Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb represents a significant terrorist threat in North Africa and the Sahel. We are aware of very few links between UK based individuals and al-Qaeda in the Maghreb.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the extent of the practice of people trafficking in the ungoverned spaces of the Maghreb. [30502]

Damian Green: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have not made a recent assessment of the extent of people trafficking in the area in question. We keep our priority countries under continuous review in order to inform the UK's upstream efforts to tackle trafficking.

Dr Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence has been presented to the UN Security Council during the UK presidency of the council on the demand by Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb for the release by Mauritania of Malian national Omar Sid-Ahmed Ould Hamma, alias Omar the Sahrawi in exchange for the release of Spanish aid workers. [30503]

Alistair Burt: No information on Omar Sid-Ahmed Ould Hamma was provided to the UN Security Council during the UK's presidency.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders: Young People

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued to people aged *(a)* under 18 years and *(b)* 18 years or over in (i) England and (ii) the Berkshire criminal justice area. [30184]

James Brokenshire: Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) became available on 1 April 1999. Data collected centrally by the Ministry of Justice on the number of ASBOs issued are collated at Criminal Justice System (CJS) area level. Berkshire is within the Thames Valley CJS area.

Between 1 April 1999 and 31 December 2008 (latest currently available) all courts in (i) England issued a total of *(a)* 6,402 ASBOs to persons under 18 years of age and *(b)* 9,384 ASBOs to persons aged 18 or over. 305 ASBOs were issued to persons whose age was not reported to the Ministry of Justice.

During the same period all courts in (ii) the Thames Valley CJS area issued a total of *(a)* 81 ASBOs to persons under 18 years of age and *(b)* 215 ASBOs to persons aged 18 or over. 10 ASBOs were issued to persons whose age was not reported to the Ministry of Justice.

ASBO data covering the period up to the end of 2009 are due to be published on 25 January 2011.

Asylum

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have been granted discretionary leave to remain in each year since 2005. [30150]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: The information requested is given in the following tables. Table A shows statistics for grants of discretionary leave in asylum applications while Table B shows grants in non-asylum applications for the years 2005 to 2009.

Table A: Grants of discretionary leave[1,2] on asylum applications received in the United Kingdom, including dependants, 2005 to 2009

Number of persons

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*[3]2009*
Total	2,795	2,335	2,150	2,175	2,675
of whom: principal applicants	2,675	2,245	2,075	2,075	2,460

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest five and may not sum to the totals shown because of independent rounding.
[2] Information is of initial decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions.
[3] Provisional figures.
Source:
Home Office, Migration Statistics

Table B: Grants of discretionary leave[1 2 3] in non-asylum applications received in the United Kingdom, excluding EEA and Swiss nationals, 2005 to 2009

					Number of decisions
	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*[4]2009*
Total	2,860	3,665	4,115	5,730	11,635
of whom: principal applicants	2,790	3,570	3,460	4,725	9,335

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest five.
[2] Information is of latest decision, including the outcome of appeals and other subsequent decisions.
[3] Derived from data presented in table 4.1 of 'Control of Immigration Statistics United Kingdom, 2009'. Grants of discretionary leave to remain in the UK are based on a management information definition and are not directly comparable with the categories published in table 4.1.
[4] Provisional figures.
Source:
Home Office, Migration Statistics

Statistics for grants of discretionary leave in applications for asylum in the United Kingdom are published in table 2.1 of 'Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary United Kingdom July-September 2010' which is available from the Home Office's Research, Development and Statistics website at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration-asylum-stats.html

A copy has been placed in the House Library.

Statistics for grants of discretionary leave in applications other than those for asylum are published within sub categories of data presented in table 4.1 of 'Control of Immigration Statistics United Kingdom, 2009'. This publication is available from the Home Office's Research, Development and Statistics website and is in the House Library.

Deportation

Andrew Percy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many appeals before Immigration and Asylum tribunals were adjourned because her Department failed to comply with removal directions in each of the last five years. [30246]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* There have been no recorded instances of adjournment at Immigration and Asylum Tribunal as a result of the Secretary of State's failure to comply with removal directions. The Secretary of State will only set removal directions (which give 72 hours notice of a planned removal) once an individual's in country appeal rights have been exhausted and works to ensure those directions are complied with and the individual is removed in accordance with those directions.

Litigation brought by an individual may result in removal directions being withdrawn by the Secretary of State to enable that litigation to be resolved. Such applications would not be made to the Immigration and Asylum Tribunal, but the High Court.

Domestic Violence: Immigrants

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she has assessed the merits of allowing women who are in the UK on spouse visas to have access to refuge accommodation; and if she will make a statement. [30596]

Damian Green *[holding answer 14 December 2010]:* A Home Office pilot project for victims of domestic violence with no recourse to public funds commenced in November 2009 and on 16 July 2010 the Home Secretary announced an extension to the project until the end of March 2011.

In the strategic narrative 'Call to End Violence against Women and Girls' on 25 November, the Home Secretary confirmed her intention to ensure that women in the UK on spouse visas who are victims of domestic violence should receive support while their case for indefinite leave is considered and that the Home Office will continue to fund support while an effective and sustainable permanent solution is established.

Work on a longer term solution is under way and information from the pilot so far will help inform these discussions.

Drugs

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cross-departmental ministerial meetings there have been on issues related to tackling drugs since her appointment. [29473]

James Brokenshire: Drugs have been discussed at a number of ministerial bilaterals and inter-ministerial meetings, including at the inter-ministerial group on drugs which was responsible for driving the development of the Government's new Drug Strategy.

Foreign Students: Monitoring

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements her Department makes to monitor the flow of foreign students *(a)* into and *(b)* out of the UK. [27824]

Damian Green: All applicants coming to the UK to study under Tier 4 must be in possession of a visa before travelling. As part of the visa issuing process, applicants have their biometrics taken and their details are checked against watch lists.

On arrival in the UK students, like all other passengers, are subject to further immigration checks to ensure they satisfy the requirements of the Immigration Act 1971 and Immigration Rules.

The e-Borders system enables checks to be made on individuals arriving or exiting the country at a majority of the points of entry to the UK. The Government are committed to ensuring that the number of UK ports undertaking exit checks is increased to ensure a complete travel history record on all passengers.

While in the UK the licensed sponsor is required to monitor the student's attendance and progress and must report any issues of non compliance to the UK

Border Agency. These reports are monitored by the UK Border Agency and action taken against both the student and sponsor, where appropriate.

The Government are currently reviewing Tier 4 of the Points Based System and a public consultation opened on 7 December. This review will also be looking at the post study work route.

Human Trafficking

Mr Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of sentence handed down to a person convicted of offences related to human trafficking was in each of the last five years. [21738]

Damian Green *[holding answer 4 November 2010]*: The following figures are provided by the UK Human Trafficking Centre's interrogation of the Police National Computer.

Trafficking for forced labour arrest (but no trafficking conviction)

2006	11.5 months
2007	One year nine months
2008	Two years
2009	11.3 months
2010	Five years nine months

Trafficking for sexual exploitation arrest (but no trafficking conviction)

2006	Three years one month
2007	Two years two months
2008	Two years two months
2009	One year eight months
2010	Three years six months

The information in this answer was previously provided to my hon. Friend erroneously in my response to parliamentary question 21737 on 19 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 1001-02W. The question asked for average length of sentence for those originally charged with offences related to human trafficking but subsequently prosecuted for a lesser charge in each of the last five years. The answer to that question should have stated that it was not possible to provide an answer as the Police National Computer does not hold details of charge history. I apologise for this error and hope that this answer clarifies the responses to both questions.

Mr MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet representatives of Stop the Traffik to discuss her policy on human trafficking. [30557]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking. On 14 October I visited Stop the Traffik to mark Anti-Slavery Day.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet Save the Children to discuss child trafficking prior to her announcement of a strategy for human trafficking. [30831]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Stephen Phillips: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will discuss with Soroptimist International her Department's policy on the publication and distribution of advertisements for sexual services prior to concluding her proposed strategy on human trafficking. [30869]

Damian Green: We are considering what can be done to prevent the advertising of sexual services in local newspapers. We have received correspondence from Soroptimist International on this issue and will take into account their representations before deciding whether further action should be taken to prevent the advertising of sexual services, including, where appropriate, through the upcoming human trafficking strategy.

Margot James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet representatives of the Human Trafficking Foundation to discuss the development of policy on human trafficking. [30876]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Mr Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet representatives of Kalayaan to discuss her policy on human trafficking and the eradication of domestic slavery. [30884]

Damian Green *[holding answer 14 December 2010]*: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Identity Cards: Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many national identity cards were issued to residents of Northern Ireland prior to the announcement of the programme's abolition. [30173]

Damian Green: Nine national identity cards were issued to people resident in Northern Ireland.

Late Night Levy

Alison McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by what mechanisms she plans to measure the effects of the late night levy on the night-time economy; whether her policy on that levy will be reviewed after a determined period; and if she will make a statement. [30830]

James Brokenshire: The effect of the late night levy will vary across the country. We believe local authorities are best placed to measure these effects. When deciding whether to introduce a levy, a local authority will consider the desirability of funding the policing and other costs of preventing or reducing crime associated with the supply of alcohol in the late-night economy. We have no plans to review the policy at present.

Police: Pensions

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether her Department has provided guidance to police forces and police authorities on the implementation of Regulation A19 of the Police Pensions Regulations 1987. [24006]

Damian Green *[holding answer 15 November 2010]*: The Home Office has not issued any guidance or procedures specifically on the use of Regulation A19 under this Government.

Serious and Organised Crime Agency: Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the operational costs of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency in Northern Ireland have been in each year since its inception. [30172]

Damian Green: The Serious Organised Crime Agency's budget is not managed on a geographic basis and so it is not possible to determine what the operational costs have been in Northern Ireland since its inception.

UK Border Agency: Training

Tessa Munt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training in safeguarding children and protection needs UK Border Agency enforcement staff receive. [30822]

Damian Green: On 2 November 2009, a new statutory duty for the UK Border Agency to safeguard children was introduced under section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009. Under this duty, all UK Border Agency staff, including enforcement staff, must complete a level 1 training package to promote awareness of children's welfare and help them to identify children at risk or in need and what action to take once identified.

Those staff whose roles include frequent contact with children must complete more extensive training, at levels 2 & 3 (dependent upon their role). They develop specialist skills and techniques, including: handling children who may be potential victims of trafficking; the national referral mechanism; internet grooming; and the UN convention on the rights of the child (best interest).

The UK Border Agency is currently reviewing its approach to managing family cases and is developing further training by working closely with child welfare organisations.

JUSTICE

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30755]

Mr Djanogly: For the period from November 2009 to November 2010, the Ministry of Justice paid 961,475 invoices. A monthly analysis is as follows:

	Number
December 2009	79,676
January 2010	70,051
February 2010	82,488
March 2010	99,513
April 2010	78,546
May 2010	75,332
June 2010	82,939
July 2010	78,868
August 2010	74,301
September 2010	78,822
October 2010	76,615
November 2010	84,324

Drugs: Dartford

Gareth Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many people normally resident in *(a)* Dartford constituency and *(b)* the criminal justice area covering Dartford constituency were convicted for drug-related offences in each of the last five years. [30413]

Mr Blunt: The number of persons found guilty at all courts in the Kent police force area for drug offences from 2005 to 2009 (latest available) is shown in the following table.

Figures presented are for courts in the Kent police force area where defendants were proceeded against only. It is not possible to identify from data collated centrally by the Ministry of Justice the residential address of defendants. This information will be held on individual court records.

Data for 2010 are planned for publication in the spring of 2011.

The number of persons found guilty at all courts for drug offences in Kent police force area, 2005 to 2009[1, 2]

2005	601
2006	573
2007	682
2008[3]	1,220
2009	1,293

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[1] The statistics relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences the principal offence is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[2] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

[3] Excludes convictions for Cardiff magistrates court for April, July and August 2008.

Source:

Justice Statistics Analytical Services—Ministry of Justice. Our ref: PQ 30413 (Table)

EU Measure

Mr Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice on how many occasions the Government have *(a)* considered exercising and *(b)* exercised an opt-in to a new EU measure in each of the last five years; and which such measures the Government have opted into. [30418]

Mr Djanogly: I refer the right hon. Member to the written ministerial statement given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (James Brokenshire) on 14 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 35-36WS, which provides these details in respect of measures for which the Home Secretary is responsible.

The Government carefully consider whether or not to opt in to new measures on each and every occasion the question arises. Since 1 December 2005 the Government have considered whether to exercise the UK's opt-in in relation to over 90 measures in many different policy areas.

I set out in the following list the main measures in which the UK has opted in during this period of time and which are the responsibility of my Department and its predecessor constituent parts that became the Ministry of Justice in May 2007. I have also included several measures and international agreements with justice and home affairs elements on which other Departments lead but which are also within the scope of this question as the opt-in also applies to such elements.

This list excludes minor amendments to instruments which have been agreed via further legislative instruments; comitology agreements (again emerging from these instruments); measures on the financial programmes in this area; or legislative instruments giving effect to international agreements, such as the conventions of the Hague Conference on Private International Law.

Ref	*Title*	*Year of opt-in decision*
593/2008	Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the law applicable to contractual obligations ("Rome I")	2008
4/2009	Council Regulation on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and co-operation in matters relating to maintenance obligations	2008
568/2009/EC	Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 amending Council Decision 2001/470/EC establishing a European Judicial Network in civil and commercial matters	2008
2010/64/EU	Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Right to Interpretation and Translation in Criminal Proceedings (Member States) initiative	2010
17513/09	Draft Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Protection Order	2010
12564/10	Draft Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Right to Information in Criminal Proceedings	2010
8502/10; 8523/10	EU—Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement	2010
2010/0178	Council Decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the United States of America on the processing and transfer of Financial Messaging Data from the European Union to the United States for the purposes of the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme	2010
8155/10	Draft Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating the sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, extending and repealing Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA	2010

Pleural Plaques

George Eustice: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what plans he to assist those people affected by pleural plaques diagnosed after 17 October 2007. [30620]

Mr Djanogly: The pleural plaques former claimants' payment scheme was set up to provide payments to those individuals who had begun, but not resolved, a legal claim for compensation for pleural plaques at the time of the 2007 House of Lords judgment that the condition was not compensatable under the civil law. This specific group of people had an understandable expectation at the time of making their legal claim that it would result in compensation, and there are no plans to extend the scheme to people diagnosed with pleural plaques after 17 October 2007. However the Government remain committed to supporting people who develop serious asbestos related conditions such as mesothelioma.

Prisons: Psychology Services

Mr Ronnie Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many *(a)* chartered psychologists, *(b)* trainee psychologists and *(c)* psychological assistants have been employed by the Prison Service in the last five years. [30249]

Mr Blunt: Information on the number of chartered psychologists, trainee psychologists and psychological assistants employed by the public sector Prison Service in the last five years is shown in the following tables. Both joiners and staff in post figures are provided for the period. These figures include associated workers, who are involved with programmes but are not psychologists.

Number of psychologists joining the public sector Prison Service between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2010

Grade	*Total*
Chartered psychologist[1]	49
Trainee psychologist	98
Psychological assistant	1,015
Total	1,162

[1] Chartered Psychologist includes psychology manager and senior manager grades.

Number of psychologists in post in the public sector Prison Service in the last five years

	As at 31 March each year				
Grade	*2010*	*2009*	*2008*	*2007*	*2006*
Chartered psychologist[1]	253	314	325	320	314
Training psychologists	352	312	336	328	271
Psychological assistant	371	373	401	397	364
Total	976	999	1062	1045	949

[1] Chartered Psychologist includes psychology manager and senior manager grades.

Property Law: Cohabitation

David Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what recent representations he has received on the simplification of property law for unmarried co-habiting couples whose relationship ends. [30619]

Mr Djanogly: I have received a small number of representations on the simplification of property law for unmarried co-habiting couples whose relationship ends. These have been from hon. Members on behalf of their constituents and from members of the public who have written directly to me or other Ministers.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bangladesh: Agriculture

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans his Department has to encourage agricultural development in Bangladesh. [30468]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) is currently funding a number of ongoing programmes, which support agricultural development in Bangladesh. For example, we are supporting poor farmers to improve their production and generate more income in six key agricultural sectors (potatoes, maize, vegetable, jute, fish and prawns). We also support over 2 million very poor people in urban and rural areas to undertake agricultural activities (livestock rearing, homestead gardening) for their own consumption and for sale.

Decisions on the future direction of the UK's development programme in Bangladesh over the next four years are due to be taken in February/March 2011.

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on agricultural development in Bangladesh in each of the last five years. [30472]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) has spent the following amounts on agriculture and rural development in Bangladesh in each of the last five financial years.

	£
2005-06	9,853,700
2006-07	13,353,800
2007-08	13,132,700
2008-09	16,707,000
2009-10	17,063,000
Total	70,110,200

In addition, we have spent £16,097,000 on agriculture and rural development in Bangladesh so far during the current financial year 2010-11.

Bangladesh: Climate Change

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the effects of climate change on *(a)* agriculture and *(b)* food security in Bangladesh. [30469]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) has supported a number of joint assessments with the Government of Bangladesh and other development partners.

DFID supported the development of the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) 2009. The BCCSAP outlines the risks that Bangladesh faces due to climate change, including in agriculture and food security, and provides a framework for engagement and investment to enable the country to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Further information on the BCCSAP can be found at:

www.moef.gov.bd

In conjunction with other development partners, the UK also helped the Government of Bangladesh develop a Country Investment Plan for agriculture, food security and nutrition. This provides a coherent set of priority investment programmes, including on adapting to climate change. The report can be accessed at:

www.ifpri.org/event/bangladesh-food-security-investment-forum

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to ensure that poor farmers in Bangladesh are able to adapt to climate change. [30470]

Mr Duncan: The UK is the largest donor to the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund. This multi-donor fund will support the implementation of the Government of Bangladesh's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP).

The BCCSAP includes a range of climate adaptation programmes in Bangladesh, including ensuring that poor farmers are able to adapt to climatic shock and protect their livelihoods. The BCCSAP also includes piloting the introduction of drought and saline resistant rice varieties which will make crops more climate resilient, as well as infrastructure improvement projects such as strengthening embankments and dykes to protect the most vulnerable areas of the country.

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on climate change adaptation for smallholder farmers in Bangladesh in each of the last five years; and what proportion of his Department's expenditure on *(a)* climate change measures overseas, *(b)* climate change adaptation overseas, *(c)* climate change measures in the developing world and (d) climate change adaptation in the developing world this represents. [30471]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) has spent £11,917,185 on climate change adaptation in Bangladesh over the last five years through a number of programmes. One major programme, the Comprehensive Disaster Management programme, has helped local communities develop disaster risk reduction action plans and provided funds to implement them. It has also provided support for national early warning systems that provide information on cyclone and flood risks to the general population. These activities directly benefit smallholder farmers as well as other vulnerable people, including the extreme poor and landless.

DFID does not keep separate records of amounts spent on climate change adaptation for smallholder farmers in Bangladesh. It is therefore not possible to provide a breakdown for each of the last five years, nor to compare it to the various total expenditures on climate change overseas and in the developing world.

Bangladesh: Food

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the food security situation in Bangladesh. [30467]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development monitors the food security situation in Bangladesh closely, drawing on our own analysis as well as external sources (e.g. the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and the Bangladesh Food Policy Monitoring Unit). Our current assessment is that rice production in 2010 will be around 3% higher than in 2009 and that there is no general shortage of food in the country. However, food prices continue to rise faster than general inflation and around 20% of the population continue to suffer from food insecurity. Although not heavily dependent on food imports, Bangladesh also remains vulnerable to fluctuations in global food prices, particularly for rice and wheat.

Food insecurity is particularly acute in the southern areas of Bangladesh, which were affected by cyclone Aila in 2009. Through the World Food Programme, the UK is providing additional food and nutritional supplements to 13,000 families who continue to live on embankments more than one year after the cyclone.

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on emergency food aid in Bangladesh in each of the last five years. [30473]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) has spent the following amounts on emergency food aid in Bangladesh in each of the last five financial years.

	£
2005-06	62,173
2006-07	216,334
2007-08	1,255,273
2008-09	0
2009-10	0
Total	1,533,779

In addition, we have spent £900,000 on emergency food aid in Bangladesh so far during the current financial year 2010-11.

Botswana: Agriculture

Mr Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what plans he has to assist the agricultural development of Botswana; [30368]

(2) what plans he has to assist Botswana to meet its commitments under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development programme. [30372]

Mr Duncan: Our plans to assist agricultural development in Botswana are primarily through the Department for International Development's (DFID's) support to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development programme (CAAPD). DFID has so far contributed £10 million to CAADP, which aims to strengthen pan-African and regional institutions' agricultural productivity.

Mr Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on agricultural development in Botswana in each of the last five years. [30370]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has had no bilateral programme in Botswana since 2005. Botswana still benefits indirectly from a range of regional and continental initiatives. However, DFID recording systems do not routinely disaggregate country level expenditure under such programmes. Compiling the requested information would incur disproportionate cost.

Botswana: Climate Change

Mr Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the effects of climate change on agriculture and food security in Botswana. [30371]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development's (DFID's) Southern Africa Regional Climate Change Programme has carried out an assessment of the effects of climate change on agriculture and food security in Botswana. While the current climate is already contributing to low food production, the effects of future climate change are expected to be devastating — some of the highest warming rates in the region are projected for Botswana.

Mr Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to assist farmers in Botswana to adapt to climate change. [30504]

Mr Duncan: As the Department for International Development (DFID) has no bilateral country programme in Botswana, our support to farmers facing climate change is indirect through regional, continental and global programmes.

The UK Government have committed to providing £1.5 billion in Fast Start finance over the period 2010-12, to help the developing world carry out the urgent work needed to adapt to climate change, adopt clean technology and reduce emissions from deforestation. This year the UK is allocating approximately 41% of its Fast Start allocation for adaptation, a significant share of which has been designed to benefit smallholder farmers.

Mr Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on climate change adaptation for smallholder farmers in Botswana in each of the last five years; and what proportion of his Department's expenditure on *(a)* climate change overseas, *(b)* climate change adaptation overseas, *(c)* climate change in the developing world and *(d)* climate change adaptation in the developing world this represents. [30505]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has had no bilateral country programme in Botswana since 2005. Botswana still benefits indirectly from a range of regional and continental initiatives tackling climate change adaptation. However, DFID recording systems do not routinely disaggregate country level expenditure under such programmes. Compiling the requested information would incur disproportionate cost.

DFID recognises that smallholder farmers are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The UK Government have committed to providing £1.5 billion in Fast Start finance over the period 2010-12, to help the developing world carry out the urgent work needed to adapt to climate change, adopt clean technology and reduce emissions from deforestation. This year, the UK is allocating approximately 41% of its Fast Start allocation for adaptation, a significant share of which has been designed to benefit smallholder farmers.

Botswana: Food

Mr Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the food security situation in Botswana. [30369]

Mr Duncan: According to the latest analysis carried out by the Southern Africa Development Community, cereal production has more than doubled in Botswana since last year, following good rains and the provision of incentives to farmers, but the country still faces a national cereal deficit. This results in malnutrition, especially among poor families.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30754]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) made a total of 45,816 payments during the period December 2009 to November 2010.

Overseas Aid

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to reduce the cost of administering overseas aid funded by his Department. [30569]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) will cut core administration costs by a third over the next four years of the spending review 2010 (SR10).

The key steps the Department plans to take are to:

(i) Drive efficiencies in back office functions;

(ii) Reduce consultancy costs;

(iii) Rationalise the floor space and increase rental opportunity for our London office;

(iv) Review our global footprint aligned with the Bilateral Aid Review;

(v) Drive efficiencies in travel, training and staff allowances costs; and

(vi) Reduce the number of senior civil servants.

The Department's annual operational planning process will confirm details of how we will meet the savings target.

Sierra Leone: Economic Growth

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to increase the rate of long-term economic growth in Sierra Leone. [30454]

Mr O'Brien: Sierra Leone is making a robust recovery from the economic downturn, with growth forecast to reach 5.2% in 2011 and 6% in 2012, which is comparable to the sub-Saharan Africa regional average.

The Department for International Development (DFID) is supporting Sierra Leone to increase the rate of economic growth. Following the outcome of the bilateral aid review (BAR), DFID will take forward work to improve the investment climate and stimulate private investment in Sierra Leone, thereby increasing economic growth. DFID will improve the investment climate by supporting macroeconomic stability and simplifying the tax regime. DFID will increase private investment and productivity by improving the country's energy infrastructure, as well as making complementary investments for developing human capital. The UK Government will also support the Government of Sierra Leone to maximise economic growth from investments in key sectors, including the minerals sector.

Sudan: Reconstruction

Ms Ritchie: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to develop peacebuilding projects in Sudan. [30333]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The UK is working actively to prevent conflict and build peace in Sudan. We are a strong supporter of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and we are working intensively with partners to ensure a peaceful and credible Southern Sudan referendum in January 2011, whose outcome is respected by all and which lays the basis for peaceful relations between North and South. I visited Sudan in November to press for progress and the Foreign Secretary chaired a special Security Council session on Sudan on 16 November under our presidency to build international consensus. The UK also continues to support efforts for a comprehensive and inclusive settlement which ends the conflict in Darfur.

The UK also funds a number of programmes focusing on peacebuilding in Sudan. For example, our three year support to the Southern Sudan Peacebuilding Fund implemented by Pact Sudan, an international non-governmental organisation, is helping over 100 local organisations of elders, youth, and women's groups in Southern Sudan to take early steps to prevent conflict, or intervene and mediate when conflicts erupt. Our £5 million contribution to the multi-donor Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund has helped reduce tension between pastoralists and farmers. In its next phase, the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund will support the building of 60 new water systems to provide fairer access to water which will reduce conflict between communities.

UN Women

Mrs Laing: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with the executive director of UN Women on the development programme of the agency; and if he will make a statement. [30248]

Mr Duncan: The Secretary of State for International Development met the Head of UN Women, Michelle Bachelet, at the millennium development goals (MDG) summit in New York in September this year. The UK Government maintains close contact with Ms Bachelet's office and with her senior staff.

Mrs Laing: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what criteria he is applying in his Department's multilateral aid review to determine the UK's financial contribution to UN Women. [30295]

Mr Duncan: In July this year, the UK Government began a review of all the funding we provide to multilateral agencies. This review is using criteria that include results, value for money and how well agencies work with other partners in delivering for poor people.

The Department for International Development (DFID) strongly supports the establishment of the new United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, known as UN Women. UNIFEM, which is the largest of the agencies that will be merged into UN Women, is being assessed according to the multilateral aid review criteria. It will be important to take these findings into account when making a decision on UK funding for UN Women.

Yemen: Overseas Aid

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what *(a)* funds and *(b)* other resources his Department has allocated to Yemen in the last 12 months. [30571][1]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development has allocated £50 million of programme funding for development projects in Yemen for this financial year 2010-11. In financial year 2009-10 a total of £27 million was disbursed, as reported in "Statistics for International Development", available on DFID's website.

There are ten international staff and six local staff working full-time on the Yemen programme.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Conferences: Finance

Robert Halfon: To ask the Attorney-General what the Law Officers' Departments' annual budget for conferences was on *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [29965]

The Attorney-General: The information requested is detailed in the following table.

£

	Conference budget	
Department	*7 May 2010*	*7 December 2010*
TSol, AGO and HMCPSI[1]	12,000	0
SFO[2]	201,000	61,000
CPS[3]	190,000	127,500
NFA[3]	17,365	5,000

[1] The cost of staff attending conferences as part of their ongoing training is met from the training budget. The training budget does not separately identify the amount allocated to conferences.

[2] The SFO budget for conferences covers both internal staff conferences and attendance at external events by staff as well as other minor expenditure such as sponsorship.

[3] This figure also covers staff attendance at external conferences.

Ejup Ganic

Mr Whittingdale: To ask the Attorney-General what proportion of the Crown Prosecution Service's budget for 2010-11 has been accounted for by the case of Ejup Ganic. [30678]

The Attorney-General: The extradition proceedings on behalf of the Republic of Serbia in respect of Dr Ejup Ganic accounted for 0.015% of the Crown Prosecution Service's budget for 2010-11.

1.*[Official Report, 12 January 2011, Vol. 521, c. 5MC.]*

Mr Whittingdale: To ask the Attorney-General what expenses have been paid to prosecution witnesses or other employees for attending the extradition hearing of Ejup Ganic. [30680]

The Attorney-General: No witness expenses were paid by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for witnesses attending the extradition hearing of Dr Ejup Ganic. Travel and subsistence claims made by CPS staff are not recorded against individual cases. It is however estimated that claims for attending the extradition hearing did not exceed £150.

Mr Whittingdale: To ask the Attorney-General what translation costs have been incurred by the Crown Prosecution Service on the case of Ejup Ganic. [30681]

The Attorney-General: The total costs incurred by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) in respect of translation/interpretation in the extradition proceedings of Dr Ejup Ganic amounted to £1,600.

The CPS assigned a Serbo-Croat-speaking member of staff to liaise with the Serbian authorities to minimise interpretation and translation costs. The Serbian authorities appointed an English speaker to liaise with the CPS and counsel. All documentation provided in support of the request was translated prior to submission into English by the Serbian authorities, although on one occasion a document was translated into English by a translator paid by the CPS so that it could be given urgent consideration by counsel in advance of the official translation being submitted. The CPS also paid the costs of an interpreter attending the extradition hearing for one of its witnesses.

Human Trafficking: International Co-operation

Jim Shannon: To ask the Attorney-General what co-operation there is between the police and police forces in *(a)* other European countries and *(b)* non-European countries in respect of human trafficking. [30531]

Damian Green: I have been asked to reply.

Effective collaboration and co-operation with international law enforcement partners is an essential part of the United Kingdom's approach to tackling human trafficking.

As part of the overall programme to tackle organised immigration crime, including human trafficking, the Serious Organised Crime Agency runs programmes of activity which focus on source and transit countries. This involves co-operation with international law enforcement agencies bilaterally and through Interpol and Europol.

The Metropolitan police service in conjunction with the Romanian national police established a Joint Investigation Team. This led to a number of arrests in both the UK and Romania of an organised crime gang involved in trafficking children to the UK and within Europe.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts: Education

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 19 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 968W, on arts: education, whether he discussed the withdrawal of teaching support funding from arts degree courses with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills before the decision was announced. [30925]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: I did not discuss funding for arts degree courses with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills before the outcome of the spending review.

Media Ownership

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport whether *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in his Department have had recent discussions with (i) Ofcom and (ii) the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills on the News Corporation bid for BSkyB. [30953]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: Ministers and officials at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) discuss a wide range of issues with Ofcom and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. DCMS has responsibility for the Media sector, including the Media Ownership rules; accordingly, it is important to understand the competition process that will be followed in the News Corporation bid for BSkyB. However, there is no DCMS role in the decision making process and I have no locus for intervention.

Creative Partnerships

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport when the funding for Creative Partnership projects will end. [30922]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: Funding is in place to support the current round of Creative Partnership schools through to the end of the academic year in July 2011.

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what plans he has to replace the work of Creative Partnerships in schools. [30951]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: Creative Partnerships are funded by Arts Council England which believes that every child should have the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts and has made this one of its strategic goals for the next decade. In addition to encouraging schools to raise standards of arts education through Arts Award and Artsmark, Arts Council England will support children and young people as part of its national portfolio funding programme.

Creative Partnerships: Young People

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many young people have participated in Creative Partnerships since their inception; what assessment he has made of the outcomes of such partnerships; and what evidence he evaluated to make that assessment. [30954]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: Over 1 million children have participated in Creative Partnerships since 2002. A number of independent research projects have been published, but my Department has not conducted its own assessment of the programme.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how much his Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28139]

John Penrose: The amounts spent by the Department on press cuttings in each year since 1997 are set out in the following table:

	Cost £ (exc. VAT)
2009-10	48,374.06
2008-09	45,402.86
2007-08	68,072.16
2006-07	86,945.43
2005-06	61,690.33
2004-05	62,958.24
2003-04	70,384.48
2002-03	55,363.64
2001-02	56,652.75
2000-01	50,488.37
1999-2000	46,575.73
1998-99	33,830.58
1997-98	25,478.99

These costs include copyright charges to the Newspaper Licensing Agency paid via our press cuttings service provider.

English Heritage

George Eustice: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport (1) how much English Heritage spent on staffing in Cornwall in the latest year for which figures are available; [30621]

(2) how much English Heritage spent on external consultants for projects in Cornwall in the latest year for which figures are available; [30622]

(3) what the budget for English Heritage is in the South West for *(a)* 2010-11 and *(b)* 2011-12; [30623]

(4) how many employees English Heritage employed in *(a)* Cornwall and *(b)* the South West in the latest year for which figures are available. [30624]

John Penrose: The information requested is not held by this Department and relates to matters that are the responsibility of English Heritage.

Accordingly, I have asked the chief executive of English Heritage to write direct to the hon. Member for Camborne and Redruth (George Eustice).

Copies of the reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Football: World Cup

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Football Association and *(b)* his Australian counterpart on support for the Australian bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup. [30408]

Hugh Robertson: Over the last few months, the Secretary of State and I have had a wide range of meetings to discuss the World Cup bids for 2018 and 2022. However, which bid for 2022 received the support of the English bid was a question for the Football Association.

Libraries

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what consideration he has given to the merits of using his statutory powers in the event of a local authority not fulfilling its legal duty to maintain an acceptable level of library provision. [30952]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: The Department takes compliance with the statutory duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service under the Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964 very seriously. The Minister with responsibility for culture, communities and the creative industries, the Under-Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport, my hon Friend the Member for Wantage (Mr Vaizey) wrote to all local authorities recently to remind them of their statutory duties.

The use of the Secretary of State's statutory powers must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Olympic Games 2012

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Olympic Park Legacy Company and *(b)* the London borough of Newham on (i) bids for the use of the Olympic Stadium after the London 2012 Olympics and (ii) the effect of each bid on the development of (A) UK athletics, (B) UK sport and (C) the economy. [30513]

Hugh Robertson: The Olympic Park Legacy Company is responsible for determining the long-term legacy use of the Olympic Stadium and from time to time provides updates on progress to its founder members (the Mayor of London, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport).

Olympic Games 2012: Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what recent discussions he has had with the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure in the Northern Ireland Executive in relation to the use of venues in Northern Ireland as training venues for the London 2012 Olympics. [30176]

Hugh Robertson: The Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport has not had discussions with the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure in the Northern Ireland Executive in relation to the use of venues in Northern Ireland as Olympic training venues for the London 2012 Olympics. However, I met my Northern Ireland counterpart at the Commonwealth games in Delhi.

There are 26 potential pre-games training camp (PGTC) venues in Northern Ireland listed in the pre-games training camp guide, and agreements for use of PGTC's are made directly between a National Olympic Committee or National Paralympic Committee and the facility. Games-time training venues must be within a short travelling distance of athletes' accommodation, and there are no competition venues in Northern Ireland.

Sports: Parks

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many outdoor fitness parks for adults were built in each year since 2005. [30438]

Hugh Robertson: Neither this Department nor Sport England holds the information in the format requested.

Sports: Tickets

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what estimate he has made of the annual number of tickets for *(a)* sporting and *(b)* arts events which are sold on the secondary market. [31094]

Hugh Robertson: The Government have not made any estimates of the number of tickets sold on the secondary market.

Sportsgrounds

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what research his Department has evaluated on the number of stadiums used for athletic events at each Olympiad which are no longer capable of hosting athletic competitions. [30485]

Hugh Robertson: This Department has not evaluated specific research on athletics stadiums used for previous Olympic Games and their post-Games use.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland Flag

12. **Andrew Rosindell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will bring forward proposals for an officially-recognised flag for Northern Ireland. [29921]

Mr Swire: Flags are a devolved matter in Northern Ireland. The Union flag is the official flag of Northern Ireland.

Residual Terrorist Groups

13. **Mark Menzies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent assessment he has made of the threat to security in Northern Ireland from residual terrorist groups; and if he will make a statement. [29922]

Mr Paterson: The threat level in Northern Ireland is currently 'Severe', meaning an attack is highly likely. So far this year there have been 39 attacks against national security targets. But these groups also engage in civil administration and many other criminal activities, and are a scourge on the community. They will not drag Northern Ireland back to the past.

Comprehensive Spending Review: Community Policing

14. **Tom Greatrex:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with the Northern Ireland Executive on the effects of the outcomes of the comprehensive spending review on the contribution of frontline community policing to tackling security threats in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [29923]

Mr Paterson: I meet regularly with the Minister of Justice to discuss policing the security threat. I am clear that we have secured a fair settlement for Northern Ireland as part of the spending review, which will allow the PSNI to carry out its duties. This Government will ensure that the PSNI is equipped to deal with the threat.

Economic Growth

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he plans to take to increase levels of economic growth in Northern Ireland. [29924]

Mr Swire: The Government are committed to creating a dynamic economy for the whole of the UK, based on higher levels of business investment and greater exports. The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, my hon. Friend the Member for South West Hertfordshire (Mr Gauke) will publish a paper on rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy in the new year, following consultation with Northern Ireland Ministers.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30757]

Mr Paterson: Since April 2010, 6,143 invoices have been paid by the shared service provider on behalf of the Department. Comparable figures prior to this date for the Department as it is now configured are not available, following the completion of devolution on 12 April 2010.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31179]

Mr Paterson: No estimates have been made within the Department in respect of the forthcoming increase in the standard rate of value added tax. All business areas within the Department have been made aware of the impending increase and are required to live within their delegated budgets.

Going forward, departmental spending review settlements are set on a tax-inclusive basis, including the increase to the standard rate of VAT.

Terrorism

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent discussions he has had with political parties in Northern Ireland on measures to deal with the past and its legacy in Northern Ireland. [30661]

Mr Paterson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the right hon. Member for Torfaen (Paul Murphy) on 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 133W.

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress he has made in the development of a strategy for dealing with the past and its legacy in Northern Ireland since May 2010. [30728]

Mr Paterson: Since May, I have met a range of political parties, victims groups and community organisations to seek to find a way forward on how to deal with the past in Northern Ireland. I shall set out my thinking next year. While considering what role the Government can play in any broader strategy to deal with the past, we have also adopted a consistent and open approach to the conclusions of reviews and reports into individual cases. Since May 2010, the Government have published and responded to the Bloody Sunday and Billy Wright Inquiry reports, and made a full statement in response to the police ombudsman's report into the Claudy bombings.

TREASURY

Air Passenger Duty: Northern Ireland

Naomi Long: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of the likely effects on the economy of Northern Ireland of the proposed increase in air passenger duty. [30325]

Justine Greening: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich (Dr Poulter) on 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 83W.

Banks: Finance

Simon Kirby: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to sell the Government's bank shareholdings; and if he will make a statement. [30356]

Mr Hoban: UK Financial Investments Ltd (UKFI) manages the Government's investments in Royal Bank of Scotland and Lloyds Banking Group on an arm's length and commercial basis. The Government have made it clear that it is not a permanent investor in UK banks and that its intention, overtime, is to dispose of all the investments.

UKFI's remit is to devise and execute a strategy for disposing of the Government's investments in an orderly and active way in line with its overarching objective to create and protect value for the taxpayer as shareholder. Because any decisions need to be taken in the context of changing economic and market conditions, UKFI does not think that it is possible or desirable to state hard goals such as time that would drive the sale of the Government's shares. But circumstances under which UKFI is likely to be able to sell shares are likely to be those in which the economy—and investor confidence—is recovering and in which bank share prices are firm.

Banks: Manpower

Mr Mark Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people banks with headquarters outside the UK have employed in the UK in each of the last five years; and what estimate he has made of the revenue which has accrued to the Exchequer from taxation on such banks. [30293]

Mr Hoban: Responsibility for employment statistics rests with the independent Office for National Statistics.

The information required to estimate the revenue received by the Exchequer from taxation on banks with headquarters outside the UK is not currently available.

Departmental Official Cars

Mr Watson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department are entitled to the use of (i) a car with a dedicated driver, (ii) a car from the Government car pool and (iii) a taxi ordered through a departmental account. [3204]

Mr Gauke: Under new arrangements announced on 21 May, all Treasury Ministers other than the Chancellor (for security reasons) cancelled their allocated car and driver and have been using the on demand ministerial car pool. No official or special advisor is entitled to an allocated car and driver and only Ministers are entitled to use the Government car pool service.

Civil servants and special advisers may only use an official car or taxi in properly defined circumstances.

A revised Travel and Expenses policy was introduced in July 2010 with stricter rules on travel, including taxis. Use of taxis is not an entitlement and official journeys should be made by public transport, particularly in London. Taxi fares may only be claimed where no suitable public transport is available, where travelling in an unknown locality, where public transport is infrequent or where the saving in official time is important. Taxi fares may also be reimbursed between home and the office where the journey is either early in the morning (before 6.30am) or late at night (after 10.00pm) and alternative methods of public transport are not available, for reasonable adjustment cases, welfare reasons and issues of personal safety.

All civil servants and special advisors working in the Treasury are entitled to order a taxi through a departmental account in accordance with this policy subject to prior approval from management.

Departmental Pay

Priti Patel: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was paid to officials in his Department and its non-departmental public bodies in bonuses and other payments in addition to salary in each year since 1997; how many officials received such payments; and what the monetary value was of the largest 20 payments made in each such year. [18762]

Mr Gauke: Base pay was frozen for HM Treasury during 2010-11 and will be frozen again in 2011-12 in line with the Government's public sector pay freeze, except for those staff earning the full-time equivalent of £21,000 or less, who will receive payments of at least £250 in these years.

Bonuses are paid in two circumstances: performance bonuses are those linked to the annual staff appraisal system and are paid in the year following the year in which the assessment of performance is made. Special bonuses are those paid to recognise specific contributions to pieces of work during the year. Information in the form requested on bonus payments since 2006-07 is shown in the following table. More comprehensive information than that shown in the table for years between 2002-03 and 2005-06 inclusive is not available within the disproportionate costs threshold. Information for years prior to 2002-03 is no longer available due to the introduction of a new accounting system in that year.

Bonus type	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Performance (£000)	[1]627	612	846	846
Special (£000)	[1]	92	126	121
Percentage of staff receiving a bonus	43	54	45	41
Largest award (£000)	6	10	14	18

' — ' = A brace.

[1] The two types of bonus were not separately identified in 2002-03 so an aggregated figure is given for that year.

Bonus type	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Performance (£000)	995	1,083	1,177	1,218
Number of performance awards[1]	436	461	574	1,029
Special (£000)	108	177	208	98
Number of special awards[1]	300	382	416	244
20 largest awards (£000)	15	22	20	15
	15	18	20	15
	15	16	17	15
	15	16	17	13
	15	15	17	13
	14	15	13	13
	12	15	13	13
	11	15	13	10
	10	15	13	10
	10	13	13	10
	10	11	13	10
	10	11	13	10
	10	10	13	10
	10	10	13	10
	10	10	13	10
	10	10	13	10
	10	10	13	10
	10	10	13	10
	10	10	13	10
	10	10	13	10

[1] Some staff may have received both types of bonus payment in a single financial year.

Economic and Monetary Union: EC Grants and Loans

Mr Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what date the agreement for the UK to contribute to the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism was concluded; which Minister in his Department signed it; what the date of that signature was; and from what date the provisions of the agreement took effect. [27832]

Mr Hoban: EU Finance Ministers agreed on contributions to the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism on 9 May 2010. The regulation was immediately binding on all member states the day after its publication in the *Official Journal* of the European Union on 12 May 2010.

EU Grants and Loans: Republic of Ireland

Mr Cash: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the members of the Economic and Financial Committee representing the UK have participated in discussions in that Committee on a mandate for the European Commission to negotiate a programme of support for the Republic of Ireland under the European Financial Stability Mechanism. [25893]

Mr Hoban *[holding answer 23 November 2010]*: The UK participated in discussions in the Economic and Financial Committee on the financial assistance package for Ireland. This package included support through the European Financial Stability Mechanism.

European Financial Stability Mechanism

Mr Cash: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what legal advice he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* received on the European Financial Stability Mechanism in relation to its application to the UK; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the advice he has received. [29295]

Mr Hoban *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The European Financial Stability Mechanism (EFSM) was created following agreement by a qualified majority of member states at the ECOFIN meeting on 9 May 2010. The terms of the EFSM are set out in EU Council Regulation No. 407/2010. Treasury Ministers received advice on this issue, including legal advice, as part of the process of policy development.

Personal Savings: Interest Payments

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will bring forward proposals to require banks to pay interest on cash ISA transfers from the date an application is received. [30866]

Mr Hoban: In response to a Super-Complaint from Consumer Focus, the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) published a report on the cash ISA market on 29 June 2010.

As part of the OFT's report, they recommended that cash ISA providers should ensure that consumers receive interest on every day during a cash ISA transfer and that the FSA consider the case for taking action under the Banking Conduct of Business Sourcebook (BCOBS) or for amending the BCOBS rules or guidance if providers do not follow this approach.

The British Bankers Association, Building Societies Association and Tax Incentivised Savings Association have agreed to publish revised industry guidance on cash ISA transfers. This is expected to be published shortly. It is also expected to include guidance on from what point providers should pay interest on cash ISA transfers.

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will bring forward proposals to require banks to provide customers with annual statements showing the interest rates received on savings deposits. [30867]

Mr Hoban: The Government are committed to increasing transparency in financial services as a means of improving customer outcomes. A number of steps have been taken recently to improve this.

The banking industry has agreed to provide interest rates on cash ISA statements by 2012 at the latest, following a super-complaint by Consumer Focus to the Office of Fair Trading. The Financial Services Authority (FSA) also plans to consult shortly on a requirement for firms to show interest rates for most types of savings accounts.

The FSA has also introduced improved transparency provisions, for example introducing a requirement to provide notice to consumers when an introductory or promotional rate of interest ends.

Public Sector: Employment

Gloria De Piero: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the change in the number of *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector jobs in Ashfield constituency in the period to 2015. [31276]

Danny Alexander: The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) was formed in May 2010 to make an independent assessment of the public finances and the economy.

On 29 November 2010, the OBR released the official forecast for total employment and general government employment, updated for the spending review announcements.

As the OBR sets out in paragraph 3.98, page 62 of its November 2010 economic and fiscal outlook (Cm 7979), it expects total employment to rise by 1.1 million over the next five years, from 29.0 million in 2010 to 30.1 million in 2015. General government employment is projected to fall by just over 400,000 between 2010-11 and 2015-16, which is more than offset by a rise in market sector employment of around 1.5 million.

The OBR has not published forecasts at a sub-national level.

Revenue and Customs: Liverpool

Mrs Ellman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans HM Revenue and Customs has for its building at Queens Dock, Liverpool; and if he will make a statement. [30296]

Mr Gauke: During HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC) Regional Review Programme between 2006 and 2008, it was decided to retain its building at Queens Dock, Liverpool. However, in November 2009 HMRC initiated a further review of its estate in Liverpool and is now considering a number of options arising from that review. Vacating the building at Queens Dock is the option that offers the greatest benefits to HMRC as well as substantial cost savings.

No firm decision has yet been made. HMRC will now consider how to gain best value from all of its buildings in Liverpool ensuring that the needs of taxpayers are at the forefront of its considerations. Where opportunities arise, HMRC will also work with other Government Departments to develop sharing of buildings. Like other Departments, HMRC is considering the impact of the comprehensive spending review and expects to be able to announce the final decision about Liverpool in spring 2011.

Social Security Benefits: Uprating

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the proportion of the estimated saving to the public purse arising from the implementation of the proposal in the June 2010 Budget to uprate pensions, benefits and tax credits by the Consumer Price Index which will be made in respect of *(a)* public sector pensions and *(b)* each main item of (i) benefit, (ii) tax credit and (iii) pension expenditure. [26257]

Mr Gauke: A breakdown of the savings for line 22 of table 2.1 of the June Budget is set out in the following table.

£ million

	2011-12	*2[illegible]2-13*	*2013-14*	*2014-15*
DWP pensioner benefits (GB)	310	525	830	1,190
DWP disability benefits (GB)	-20	130	375	660
DWP working age benefits (GB)	340	420	530	650
Benefits administered by Northern Ireland Executive	20	35	55	85
Child benefit	-35	60	220	370
Tax credits	225	515	1,010	1,600
Public service pensions	325	555	880	1,285

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest £5 million, and may therefore not sum to the totals recorded in table 2.1 of the June Budget.
2. All figures are on a UK basis, unless stated otherwise. Costs are shown as negative.

Taxation: Business

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many completed court actions HM Revenue and Customs has taken against *(a)* micro-businesses and *(b)* small and medium-sized enterprises for arrears of payments in the last year for which figures are available; and how many such actions resulted in the bankruptcy of the enterprise concerned. [30446]

Mr Gauke: The information is not centrally collated and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many communications received by HM Revenue and Customs from *(a)* micro-businesses and *(b)* small and medium-sized enterprises had not been responded to on 1 December 2010. [30447]

Mr Gauke: HMRC does not collect this level of data.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many communications HM Revenue and Customs received from *(a)* micro-businesses and *(b)* small and medium-sized enterprises on tax arrears in the last year for which figures are available; and what the average time taken was to respond to such communications. [30448]

Mr Gauke: The information requested is not centrally collated and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Wealth

Mr Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the proportion of gross financial wealth held in *(a)* private pensions, *([illegible]*ISAs, PEPs and TESSAs and *(c)* other accounts for each decile of gross financial wealth. [25675]

Mr Hoban: The Office for National Statistics' (ONS) Wealth and Asset Survey (WAS) collects information on total wealth, including financial wealth and private pension wealth. This can be found at;

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=15074

The survey shows that total wealth held in the UK was £9 trillion in 2006-08, the latest period for which data are available. Of this, 39% (£3.5 trillion) was held in private pension wealth, and 11% (£1 trillion) was held in financial wealth. Further details on asset breakdowns and other accounts can be obtained through the ONS.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Capita

Kate Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many contracts his Department has with Capita; and how much it has paid to Capita under such contracts in 2010-11 to date. [18627]

Mr Davey: Central records indicate that the following amounts have been spent to date with Capita companies in the financial year 2010-11.

	£
Capita	445
Capita Business Services Ltd	350
Capita Health Solutions Ltd	1,865
Capita Resourcing Ltd	15,183
Capita Resourcing Ltd t/a Veredus Interim Management	6,868

Further information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Research

Mr Tom Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much of the funding allocated by his Department for research into myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) was spent on *(a)* psychological research and *(b)* research into the physical causes of ME in the latest period for which figures are available. [30928]

Mr Willetts: The Medical Research Council (MRC) is one of the main agencies through which the Government supports medical and clinical research. The MRC is an independent body which receives its grant in aid from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The selection of projects for funding is determined through peer review.

The MRC does not classify its research projects using the terms 'psychosocial' or 'research into the physical causes' so a breakdown of funding on this basis is not available. In the last 10 years, total MRC expenditure on research relating to CFS/ME was as follows:

	£
2000/01	0
2001/02	0
2002/03	0
2003/04	141,000
2004/05	559,000
2005/06	752,000
2006/07	800,000
2007/08	1,350,000
2008/09	728,000
2009/10	109,000

Projects included within these figures are as follows:

Professor R K Morriss, University of Liverpool—Exploratory RCT of training General Practitioners to manage patients with persistent Medically Unexplained Symptoms (MUS)

Professor P White, Queen Mary College, London—The PACE trial; A RCT of CBT, graded exercise, adaptive pacing and usual medical care for the chronic fatigue syndrome

Dr A Wearden, University of Manchester—Randomised controlled trial of nurse led self-help treatment for primary care patients with chronic fatigue syndrome

Dr K Bhui, Queen Mary College, London—Chronic Fatigue and Ethnicity

Professor F H Creed, University of Manchester—The feasibility of a population based study of CFS, IBS and CWP

Dr C Clark, Queen Mary College, London General and specific risk markers and preventive factors for chronic fatigue and irritable bowel syndromes

Further information about most of these projects can be found on the MRC's online research portfolio at:

http://www.mrc.ac.uk/ResearchPortfolio/index.htm

Conditions of Employment

Mr David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) if he will place in the Library a copy of the terms of reference of his Department's review of arrangements for workplace rights compliance and enforcement; [30558]

(2) when he expects to conclude his Department's review of arrangements for workplace rights compliance and enforcement; [30559]

(3) whether he plans to hold a public consultation *(a)* as part of and *(b)* on the results of his Department's review of arrangements for workplace rights compliance and enforcement. [30560]

Mr Davey *[holding answer 14 December 2010]:* I intend to place a copy of the terms of reference for the review of the Government workplace rights compliance and enforcement arrangements in the Library shortly.

The review will start in January, and conclude later in 2011. It is a part of a wider, rolling review of employment law being co-ordinated by my Department.

The first phase of the compliance review will be carried out internally within Government, but involve meetings with key interested parties to solicit views and test initial thinking. Following the first phase BIS will publish a statement of findings and intended next steps in the context of a progress report on the wider employment law review.

There will be a public consultation following the statement of initial findings if the nature and scale of any proposed changes makes this appropriate.

Debts: Advisory Services

Mr Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what proposals his Department has considered to ensure that advice offered by providers of debt management plans meets standards adequate to prevent vulnerable consumers from being sold inappropriate products. [30708]

Mr Davey: All who provide debt management services are required to be licensed under the Consumer Credit Act 1974. Where the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has evidence of unfair practices, action can be taken to refuse or revoke or place conditions on the consumer credit licence of those concerned.

The OFT's Debt Management Guidance (the Guidance) sets out minimum standards for debt management companies. Following a review of the extent to which debt management companies comply with this guidance, enforcement action was taken in 2010 against 129 of these companies.

Work to update the Guidance and make the standards the OFT expects licensees to adhere to make sure the guidance addresses new developments in the market when providing debt advice is well underway and will be the subject of a public consultation in early 2011.

Debts: Developing Countries

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the answer of 22 July 2010, *Official Report*, columns 590-1W, on export credit guarantees, which of the Export Credits Guarantee Department recoveries from low and lower-middle income governments recouped since 2000 were *(a)* recouped directly from the relevant government and *(b)* recompensed from the Department for International Development under debt cancellation schemes. [24055]

Mr Davey: The answer of 22 July 2010, *Official Report*, columns 590-1W, provided details of recoveries of debts owed to ECGD as a result of claims paid under issued guarantees and insurance policies. Interest that had accrued while such debts were outstanding was not included because of changes to ECGD's recording systems in 2005 which meant that it is not possible to report interest received market by market prior to 2005.

The following table reports recoveries from low and lower middle income countries amounts from 2000/01 to 2004/05 without interest and from 2005/06 inclusive of interest received.

		£ million
	Prior to 2005/06	*From 2005/06*
Angola	0.00	151.72
Morocco	31.50	13.49
Ecuador	0.00	35.82
Egypt	19.60	76.40
Indonesia	94.00	490.46
Iraq	0.00	3.17
Jordan	44.20	361.12
Kenya	16.70	7.88
Nigeria	129.10	1,735.12
Pakistan	0.00	4.42
Philippines	23.60	5.44
Vietnam	0.0	4.89

In accordance with Her Majesty's Government debt policy since 2000, heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) have not been required to make any repayments owed to the UK. Amounts that fall due under debt agreements with HIPCs which cannot be written-off by ECGD for statutory reasons are paid to ECGD by the Department for International Development (DFID). Details of principal and interest paid by DFID to ECGD on behalf of the HIPCs since 2000 are set out in the following table.

	Principal and interest paid by DFID to ECGD on behalf of the HIPCs since 2000
Benin	1.9
Bolivia	1.3
Cameroon	24.7
Congo DR	0.9
Congo Rep	0.3
Ethiopia	1.2
Guinea Rep	0.1
Guyana	11.2
Madagascar	7.1
Malawi	10.4
Mali	0.2
Mauritania	0.02

	Principal and interest paid by DFID to ECGD on behalf of the HIPCs since 2000
Mozambique	7.0
Niger	0.2
Tanzania	19.0
Uganda	0.4
Yemen	3.3
Zambia	3.8

Note:
The data include some amounts that were paid direct to HIPCs or in respect of the cancellation of old aid loans but such amounts are considered to be minimal.
Source:
ECGD/DFID

Departmental Energy

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the cost was of *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas supplied to his Department's offices at 1 Victoria Street in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [29670]

Mr Davey: In the last 12 months for which figures are available, the Department spent the following on electricity and gas at 1 Victoria street:

£

	Electricity	*Gas*
November 2009	55,095.02	6,469.11
December 2009	42,821.16	10,227.04
January 2010	44,991.53	24,402.89
February 2010	42,395.66	13,949.79
March 2010	47,334.83	10,276.96
April 2010	41,230.88	4,819.80
May 2010	43,539.43	3,500.10
June 2010	45,099.84	2,228.54
July 2010	49,003.87	1,799.09
August 2010	49,770.32	2,278.66
September 2010	48,524.94	3,370.36
October 2010	47,855.76	4,967.08

Departmental Manpower

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many staff in each age group his Department and its predecessors employed at each *(a)* grade and *(b)* location in (i) 1980, (ii) 1983, (iii) 1987, (iv) 1992, (v) 1997, (vi) 2001 and (vii) each year since 2005. [17411]

Mr Davey: The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) was created on Friday 5 June 2009 from the merger of the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) and the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) which ceased to exist from that date.

The following two tables show the numbers of staff in each age group by grade, and by location from the formation of BIS until the end of that financial year. Asterisks in the tables indicate that the number in that category is fewer than 10, and therefore, this figure has not been included to avoid any potential identification of individuals.

Records are not held centrally for the predecessor Departments, but staffing information on BERR, the DIUS and former Department of Trade and Industry is available on the Office for National Statistics website, accessed via the following link:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/resources/stats-archive/archived-reports.aspx

BIS staff in age group by location 5 June 2009-30 March 2010

Age band	*London*	*Sheffield*	*Cardiff*	*Other*
16-24	70	*	*	*
25-29	267	10	*	*
30-34	349	30	*	15
35-39	325	24	*	22
40-44	506	58	*	31
45.49	588	58	12	33
50-54	462	63	10	46
55-59	289	56	11	29
60-64	147	12	*	32
Over 65	25	*	*	7

BIS staff in age group by grade 5 June 2009-30 March 2010

	Grade								
Age band	*AA*	*AO*	*EO*	*HEO*	*SEO*	*G7*	*G6*	*G5*	*SCS*
16-24	*	*	38	38	*	*	*	*	*
25-29	*	14	49	141	11	68	*	*	*
30-34	*	15	40	115	47	133	35	13	*
35-39	*	23	58	84	40	98	44	24	*
40-44	*	57	115	145	76	105	63	33	*
45.49	*	64	95	164	82	148	78	37	15
50-54	*	55	78	104	94	125	77	28	17
55-59	*	43	44	75	42	82	49	34	10
60-64	*	38	22	37	21	21	22	*	*
Over 65	*	*	*	13	*	*	*	*	*

* = Fewer than 10 staff

Departmental Postal Services

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the monetary value was of contracts between his Department and its predecessors and *(a)* Post Office Ltd and *(b)* Royal Mail in (i) 1997-98 and (ii) each year since 2004-05. [24901]

Mr Davey: The Department's Facilities Management Team did not have a contract with Post Office Ltd or Royal Mail in 1997-98.

In April 2004 following an Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) competition, contracts were awarded to: Royal Mail Group, to provide same day courier services and Parcelforce Worldwide, to provide next day/48-hour courier services to the Department.

Expenditure on the Royal Mail Group contract to provide same day courier services:

	£
2004-05	38,517
2005-06	35,115
2006-07	37,065
2007-08	28,944
2008-09	20,007

	£
2009-10	29,316

Expenditure on the Parcelforce Worldwide contract to provide next day/48-hour courier services:

	£
2004-05	46,209
2005-06	50,560
2006-07	42,496
2007-08	45,340
2008-09	38,328
2009-10	37,353

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what services provided by his Department and its predecessors were the subject of a contract with Post Office Ltd in 1997-98 and have subsequently become the subject of a contract with another supplier; and what the monetary value was of each such contract in *(a)* 1997-98 and *(b)* the latest period for which figures are available in each case. [24903]

Mr Davey: The Departments Facilities Management Team did not have a contract with Post Office Ltd in 1997-98. Subsequently Royal Mail Group and Parcelforce Worldwide held courier contracts.

Since our current courier contract, with TNT UK Ltd, started in January 2010 the Department has spent:

	£
January-March 2010	5,324
April-October 2010	17,090

Employment Law

Dr Whiteford: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what plans he has to review the effectiveness of employment law. [30795]

Mr Davey: Earlier this year the Government announced a Whitehall wide review of employment laws. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is coordinating this review across Government, and all relevant departments that have a responsibility for developing, administering or enforcing employment law will be considering their areas of responsibility.

We are considering employment regulations area by area, over the long term, and have started to engage with interested parties as part of the review process. We have already set out that, as part of the Growth agenda, we want to make it easier for businesses to take on staff. To contribute to that, we will be launching improved web based tools on businesslink.gov to bring together help for employers taking on new employees.

The Government aim to ensure that employment laws provide the maximum flexibility for both employers and employees, within a competitive business environment without compromising fairness. We expect to make an announcement on progress in the new year.

Financial Services

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) whether his Department's review of consumer credit will assess the merits of use of a total cost of borrowing figure instead of an annual percentage rate as a measure of the value of a loan for consumers; [31199]

(2) if he will recommend to companies providing short-term loans that they display a total cost of borrowing for their customers instead of an annual percentage rate. [31200]

Mr Davey: Companies advertising credit products are required by regulations implementing the Consumer Credit Directive to display standard information about the cost of their loans, including a representative APR, in their advertisements where the advertisement contains an interest rate or an amount relating to the cost of the credit.

As part of the review of Consumer Credit and Personal Insolvency, BIS and HM Treasury issued a joint call for evidence in October. The call for evidence closed on 10 December and while it did not ask specifically for evidence on displaying the total cost of credit rather than an APR figure, a number of responses have highlighted it as a way of making it easier for consumers to calculate how much a loan will cost them.

This issue, as well as all the others raised, is being considered as part of the review.

Higher Education: Finance

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education in respect of the number of countries in the OECD who propose to reduce public expenditure on higher education; and if he will make a statement. [30462]

Mr Willetts: There have been no recent discussions between the two Secretaries of State on this subject.

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he plans to provide targeted funding to enable teachers and health and social care professionals to enhance their skills through higher level studies. [30535]

Mr Willetts: We have set out our proposals that in future funding for higher education should largely follow the choices made by students rather than by direct grants. However, we have also recognised that high cost courses such as medicine should continue to receive such support in addition to fee income. In addition we recognise that there are lower cost subjects which are strategically important or vulnerable and also require some continuing support. We will set out priorities for residual grant in the forthcoming higher education white paper.

The funding of higher level continuing professional development for education and health employees is a matter for the Departments of Education and of Health respectively.

Insolvency

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many *(a)* compulsory and *(b)* creditor voluntary liquidations commenced in each of the last five years. [30154]

Mr Davey *[holding answer 14 December 2010]:* Annual totals for both compulsory and creditors' voluntary liquidations in England and Wales are presented in Table 1 of the Quarterly Insolvency Statistics, the latest publication of which can be found on the Insolvency Service website here:

http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/otherinformation/statistics/201011/table1.pdf

Quarter 4 figures for 2010 will be available in the next release of the Insolvency Statistics on 4 February 2011.

Policy responsibility for liquidation in Scotland and Northern Ireland lies within the devolved administrations. However, some information on these insolvencies is published in the Quarterly Insolvency Statistics on behalf of the devolved administrations, and may be found here:

http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/otherinformation/statistics/201011/table4.pdf

(Scotland) and

http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/otherinformation/statistics/201011/table6.pdf

(Northern Ireland).

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many liquidations which commenced *(a)* five, *(b)* 10, *(c)* 15 and *(d)* 20 or more years ago have not yet been finalised. [30155]

Mr Davey *[holding answer 14 December 2010]:* This information cannot be provided for all liquidations because the costs of retrieving it are disproportionate.

According to the case database maintained by the Insolvency Service, there are:

82 compulsory liquidations where the insolvency order was made five or more years ago;

15 compulsory liquidations where the insolvency order was made 10 or more years ago;

11 compulsory liquidations where the insolvency order was made 15 or more years ago;

No compulsory liquidations where the insolvency order was made 20 or more years ago where the Official Receiver has not applied for release as liquidator.

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many firms went into liquidation in each of the last 12 months. [30181]

Mr Davey: Information on the number of liquidations in England and Wales in each of the 12 months ending September 2010 can be found in the following table.

Liquidations in England and Wales

	Compulsory liquidation[1]	*Creditors' voluntary liquidation*[2, 3]
October 2009	450	936
November 2009	489	1,066
December 2009	376	1,028
January 2010	425	748
February 2010	372	979
March 2010	533	1,139
April 2010	408	1,094
May 2010	395	872
June 2010	382	943
July 2010	468	929
August 2010	293	995
September 2010	321	875

[1] Source—Insolvency Service

[2] Source—Companies House

[3] Not including those following administration

Figures after September are not available until after the publication of the Official Insolvency Statistics for quarter 4 on Friday 4 February 2011.

Policy responsibility for liquidation in Scotland and Northern Ireland lies within the devolved Administrations.

Insolvency Service

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what plans his Department has to review the governance arrangements for the Insolvency Service. [30157]

Mr Davey *[holding answer 14 December 2010]:* The Department is looking at the governance arrangements for all its partner organisations, including the Insolvency Service, with a view to having an updated governance framework in place for the new financial year. This work is being undertaken in the light of a number of factors, including the spending review settlement; the introduction across Government of spending controls such as those on pay and recruitment and on spending on marketing and advertising, IT, consultancy, estates; and the requirement to consolidate an increased number of partner organisation financial statements from 2011-12.

Intellectual Property and Growth Review

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what criteria were used to select members of the panel of experts for the Intellectual Property and Growth Review. [30650]

Mr Davey: The members of the independent panel which will advise Professor Ian Hargreaves have been selected in order to equip the review with a range of relevant expertise, including in business, innovation, economics and aspects of intellectual property.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills when he expects each of the proposed local enterprise partnerships to be fully operational. [30631]

Mr Prisk: To date 27 local enterprise partnerships have met the Government's expectations and have been asked to put their governance arrangements in place. Other partnerships continue to develop their proposals so they can be in a similar position. We will continue to engage with both groups of partnerships at a speed that is appropriate for them.

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what processes he will put in place to ensure effective communication between his Department and each local enterprise partnership. [31206]

Mr Prisk: Both this Department and the Department for Communities and Local Government are committed to working with each new local enterprise partnership to enable them to establish their roles and functions. As set out in the White Paper on Local Growth the Government will enter into a discussion with partnerships about delivering the economic vision for their area. Partnerships will differ across the country in both form and functions in order to best meet local circumstances and opportunities. As such there will be no one process for this engagement.

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will place a duty on local enterprise partnerships to co-operate with each other. [31209]

Mr Prisk: In the White Paper on Local Growth we encourage co-operation between partnerships where this would result in a more efficient use of resources and secure a better outcome than operating in isolation. This co-operation need not be restricted to neighbouring partnerships and will be particularly important where partnerships share a common interest. We will not be prescriptive how this co-operation is achieved; local enterprise partnerships are not Government bodies and are being developed from the bottom up.

Local Enterprise Partnerships: North East

Grahame M. Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills by what date he expects each proposed local enterprise partnership in the North East to be operational; and if he will make a statement. [31267]

Mr Prisk: The Tees Valley partnership has already been invited to develop their board and the other partnerships in the North East who put forward outline proposals have agreed to work together to form a single partnership; we are currently waiting for this new proposal to be submitted. It is for partnerships to work at a speed that is appropriate for them.

Newcastle Gateshead Local Enterprise Partnership

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which criteria for acceptance the Newcastle Gateshead local enterprise partnership bid did not meet. [31208]

Mr Prisk: The Newcastle Gateshead local enterprise partnership bid was considered as not covering an appropriate economic geography and provided limited evidence of support from business.

Overseas Students

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many non-EU students progressed from studying at general further education colleges to higher education institutes in the UK in *(a)* 2007-08, *(b)* 2008-09 and *(c)* 2009-10. [29870]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 9 December 2010]*: Information on the previous school type of non-EU domiciled higher education students is not currently available.

Postgraduate Education: Fees and Charges

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the effect of the higher fees for undergraduates on the take-up of postgraduate studies. [30537]

Mr Willetts: Lord Browne did not recommend any changes to the funding of postgraduate education but did recommend that participation in postgraduate study should be monitored to identify whether changes to the undergraduate funding and finance system have any effect on entry to postgraduate courses. We have committed to do so.

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what arrangements he intends to put in place to monitor the effects of higher undergraduate fees on the take-up of postgraduate studies. [30538]

Mr Willetts: The Government will monitor participation in postgraduate study to identify whether changes to the undergraduate funding and finance system have any effect on entry to postgraduate courses.

The Government are committed to Britain being a world leading place to do research. The science and research budget will be maintained in cash terms over the spending review period with resource spending of £4.6 billion a year by 2014-15. We will ring-fence that budget to ensure continuity of investment in science and research.

Postgraduate Education: Finance

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills when he expects to introduce reductions in spending on the funding of postgraduate provision. [30539]

Mr Willetts: We will publish the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) grant letter for 2011-12 shortly. It is for the council to determine how that resource should be allocated. The new system of higher education funding whereby funding will flow through the choices made by students rather than direct grants will be phased in from 2012-13. We will set our priorities for residual grant, including for taught postgraduate provision and our response to the postgraduate review in the forthcoming higher education white paper. Research postgraduate provision is not directly affected by our proposed reforms.

Regional Growth Fund

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many times the independent group chaired by Lord Heseltine to consider bids for funding from the regional growth fund has met. [30003]

Mr Prisk: The independent Advisory Panel chaired by my noble friend Lord Heseltine has not yet met. The first round of bids are required to be received by 21 January 2011.

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what budget has been allocated for the Regional Growth Fund in 2011-12. [30626]

Mr Prisk: The Regional Growth Fund budget for 2011-12 is £495 million.

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether funding for the Regional Growth Fund will be drawn from the budget allocated for regional development agencies. [30628]

Mr Prisk: Funding for the Regional Growth Fund has come from the Department for Communities and Local Government, Department for Transport and the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. No funding has come from the RDAs.

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much of the funding from the Regional Growth Fund he expects to be available for each region in each year of the spending review period. [30630]

Mr Prisk: The Regional Growth Fund (RGF) will not be distributed by region. The RGF is a challenge fund that is open to bids from all parts of England, the amount an area receives will depend on the strength of its bids in addressing the Fund's core objectives:

> To encourage private sector enterprise by providing support for projects with significant potential for economic growth and create additional sustainable private sector employment; and
>
> To support in particular those areas and communities that are currently dependent on the public sector make the transition to sustainable private sector led growth and prosperity.

Royal Mail: Belfast

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will request Royal Mail not to close the mail sorting office in Belfast. [30572]

Mr Davey: Decisions relating to the Belfast mail centre are an operational matter for Royal Mail's senior management team. The Government do not play a role in such decisions.

Royal Mail has informed me that it currently has no plans to close the mail centre in Belfast.

Royal Mail: Weather

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills when Royal Mail plans to restore its guarantee to deliver special delivery items by 1.00 pm the next day *(a)* nationwide and *(b)* in parts of the UK which are presently free of snow; and if he will make a statement. [30899]

Mr Davey *[holding answer 14 December 2010]:* The operation of Royal Mail's special delivery service is a matter for its senior management team and Government do not play a role in decisions regarding the service.

I understand from Royal Mail that the restoration of the guarantee is under daily review and that it will restore the guarantee as soon as it can be sure that it can honour the service promise in full. The company recognises that this product carries a guarantee, which it takes seriously, but currently it cannot guarantee the service promise for all items in every part of the UK. However, it continues to accept, prioritise and in most cases, deliver special delivery items to specification.

Regular service updates can be found on Royal Mail's website:

http://www.royalmail.com/portal/rm

Student Loans Company

Jeremy Lefroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what the borrowing limit is for the Student Loans Company; and whether he has plans to review that limit; [28836]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with the *(a)* Chancellor of the Exchequer and *(b)* Student Loans Company (SLC) on the effect on the financing requirements of the SLC of raising the cap on tuition fees; [28837]

(3) what estimate he has made of the net borrowing requirement of the Student Loans Company in each year from 2011-12 to 2024-25. [28838]

Mr Willetts: The costs to the Government of student loans are borne by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), rather than the Student Loans Company (SLC), and so the borrowing capacity of SLC is not significant.

Raising the cap on graduate contributions will increase the value of loans that the Government makes to students and thereby increase the Government's initial cash outlay. In the spending review period the full-time student tuition fee loan outlay is estimated to be £3.5 billion in 2012-13, £5 billion in 2013-14 and £6 billion in 2014-15.

The cash outlay does not represent a cost to the Government as it is provided to students in the form of loans which will be repaid, therefore the long term costs of student loans are shared between high-earning graduates who can afford to repay them and the Exchequer.

The effect of the proposed Higher Education reforms are included in an interim Impact Assessment, which has been published and is available on BIS's website:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/higher-education/docs/i/10-1309-interim-impact-assessment-he-funding-and-student-finance.pdf

The costs are indicative and will be met by the Department as part of the spending review settlement as agreed with the Treasury. No estimates have been made beyond 2015.

Students: Fees and Charges

Michael Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment his Department has made of the likely effects of the implementation of his proposals on tuition fees on colleges of music and conservatoires. [30066]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* Our proposals for a fairer and more progressive higher education funding system will mean that the most successful and popular institutions should be able to flourish in the new environment. Colleges of music and conservatoires offer courses which are very popular with students and so we expect them to be in a strong position to be able to attract the fee income to offset any reductions in grants from the Funding Council. Many of these institutions receive additional funding from the Funding Council to account for their small size or specialist nature, which are not recognised through the mainstream funding formula. While it is for the Funding Council to make decisions on grant allocations the Government will set out their priorities for continuing grant in the forthcoming grant letter to HEFCE and the higher education White Paper. It will be our priority that in putting the new funding system in place we do not weaken those institutions with a world class reputation for the arts and music.

Students: Grants

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many young people in each London borough received the full means-tested university maintenance grant in each of the last four years. [30212]

Mr Willetts: The number of eligible applicants who were awarded the full higher education maintenance grant in each London borough in the last four years is shown in the following table.

Full grant for maintenance—London boroughs[1]

	Academic year[2]			
	2006/07	*2007/08*	*2008/09*	*2009/10*
Barking and Dagenham	1,160	1,270	1,700	2,010
Barnet	2,370	2,740	3,060	3,290
Bexley	800	930	1,110	1,330
Brent	2,420	2,710	2,930	3,370
Bromley	1,080	1,180	1,420	1,650
Camden	1,730	1,850	2,020	1,940
City of London	40	40	40	30
Croydon	2,010	2,400	2,990	3,420
Ealing	2,520	2,870	3,230	3,390
Enfield	2,040	2,410	2,880	3,200
Greenwich	1,580	1,810	2,230	2,400
Hackney	2,420	2,590	2,860	3,150
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,140	1,330	1,460	1,490
Haringey	2,210	2,630	2,920	3,120
Harrow	1,690	2,040	2,280	2,550
Havering	680	820	950	1,120
Hillingdon	1,150	1,390	1,700	1,870
Hounslow	1,260	1,480	1,670	1,920
Islington	1,780	1,980	2,200	2,280
Kensington and Chelsea	860	940	980	990
Kingston upon Thames	760	830	910	1,100
Lambeth	2,480	2,910	3,270	3,520
Lewisham	2,180	2,540	3,040	3,200
Merton	980	1,160	1,450	1,570
Newham	3,480	3,850	4,490	4,770
Redbridge	2,010	2,280	2,770	3,140
Richmond upon Thames	740	870	980	1,050
Southwark	2,490	2,800	3,000	3,350
Sutton	580	700	900	1,110
Tower Hamlets	2,870	3,170	3,420	3,310
Waltham Forest	2,130	2,490	2,910	2,970
Wandsworth	1,640	1,810	2,080	2,180
Westminster	1,250	1,420	1,580	1,730
Total	54,530	62,240	71,430	77,520

[1] Approved applicants awarded a full maintenance grant or a special support grant in each London borough. Figures rounded to the nearest 10.

[2] Figures for academic years 2006/07 to 2008/09 are as at 15 November 2009. Figures for academic year 2009/10 are as at 14 November 2010.

Source:
Student Loans Company

Mr Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what proportion of applications for higher education maintenance grants were successful in the last three years. [30427]

Mr Willetts: The proportion of eligible applicants for a higher education maintenance grant who were awarded a full or partial maintenance grant in the last three years is shown in the following table.

Distribution of maintenance grants[1] *to applicants domiciled in England*

		Percentage of applicants in each academic year		
Entry cohort		*2007/08*	*2008/09*	*2009/10*
2006 and 2007 entry cohort	Full grant	34	34	34
	Partial grant	23	21	18
	Nil grant[2]	43	45	48
	Total	100	100	100
2008 entry cohort	Full grant	n/a	42	43
	Partial grant	n/a	29	28
	Nil grant[2]	n/a	29	29
	Total	n/a	100	100
2009 and 2010 entry cohort	Full grant	n/a	n/a	40
	Partial grant	n/a	n/a	22
	Nil grant[2]	n/a	n/a	38
	Total	n/a	n/a	100

n/a = not applicable

[1] Includes special support grant, excludes those who received an NHS bursary.

[2] Not awarded a grant because their household residual income is greater than the threshold to receive a grant, or they have not supplied income information. Eligible applicants may receive other forms of support.

Source:
Student Loans Company

Figures are shown by entry cohort because there have been changes to earnings thresholds which have affected the distribution.

Students: Loans

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the average time taken by the Student Loans Company to process loan applications was in the last year for which figures are available. [30465]

Mr Willetts: The Student Loans Company took an average of 9.9 weeks in academic year 2010/11 to process student finance applications that it manages for new and continuing students who started their course in or after September 2010. This is an improvement of 2.2 weeks on academic year 2009/10. The processing time includes time when the application is with the applicant and, therefore, cannot be progressed by the company, for example, when the company is awaiting missing evidence or when it is awaiting from the student a declaration form accepting the terms of the loan. Student finance applications include request for both loans and grants.

Teachers: Training

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what effects he expects the new funding arrangements to have on initial school teacher training provision currently funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools; and what effects he expects these arrangements to have on the initial teacher training for further education teachers currently funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. [30536]

Mr Willetts: The schools White Paper, "The Importance of Teaching", makes clear the Government's commitment to continuing improvement in the quality of teachers in schools, including attracting more high quality graduates into teaching. Arrangements for funding schools initial teacher training (ITT) will further this ambition. The Department for Education will publish detail of funding for ITT for the 2012/13 academic year early in 2011. With regard to ITT for further education, discussions are currently taking place with the Association of Colleges and other stakeholders. The Government's plans for initial teaching training for FE teachers and lecturers currently funded through the Higher Education Funding Council, will be set out in the forthcoming higher education White Paper.

Technology

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what responsibilities his Department has for the development of technical standards for industry; and in which fora of technical standards development his Department participates. [30337]

Mr Willetts *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: The Department appoints and sponsors, BSI British Standards as the UK's National Standards Body. Through BSI, the Department funds the development of standards in new and emerging technological areas including nanotechnology, regenerative medicine and biometrics. BSI also play an important role as the UK member of the International Standards Organisation and of the European standardisation bodies working to agree standards which significantly contribute to enhancing the UK's economic performance.

My officials also participate in the development of standards as members of technical committees across a broad range of industrial sectors.

Technology Innovation: Business

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills by what means the Technology Strategy Board plans to liaise with local enterprise partnerships to facilitate innovation support. [30005]

Mr Willetts: Local enterprise partnerships will not have a formal role in providing direct incentives to enable technology innovation by business. This will simplify the way in which companies seek and receive support for technology-based innovation, as they will deal directly with the Technology Strategy Board.

The Technology Strategy Board will work with those local enterprise partnerships that can demonstrably help the Technology Strategy Board extend its reach and engage with innovative businesses.

Work Experience: Social Security Benefits

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the extension of eligibility for jobseeker benefits to graduates on unpaid work placements. [29845]

Mr Willetts: I met the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, my right hon. Friend the Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Mr Duncan Smith), on 23 September when we discussed a range of cross-cutting issues, including graduate unemployment.

As part of the coalition Government's Get Britain Working programme, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is amending jobseeker's allowance (JSA) regulations to allow claimants to participate in work experience for up to eight weeks. This will be available to 18 to 21-year-olds from January 2011 and in April DWP will consider initial take-up of this option with a view to extending to all JSA customers from June 2011.

CABINET OFFICE

British Overseas Territories

Mrs Moon: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what duties there are on the Government to carry out impact assessments of legislation on British Overseas Territories; and if he will make a statement. [29951]

Mr Bellingham: I have been asked to reply.

Where the Government are legislating for one or more Overseas Territory by UK primary legislation or by Order in Council, the same rules relating to impact assessments apply as apply when the Government are legislating for the United Kingdom. However, as legislation applicable in the Overseas Territories rarely, if ever, has any effect on the UK public, private or voluntary sector, an impact assessment is not usually required to be prepared for such legislation. Where an Overseas Territory legislature passes legislation for that territory, there is no requirement for the Government to carry out an impact assessment.

Charities

Richard Fuller: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will bring forward proposals to repeal the requirement for charities to provide a public notice for street collections as required by the Police, Factories etc (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916 as amended by section 251 and section 29 of the Local Government Act 1972. [29783]

Mr Hurd: There will be a review of charity legislation next year, which will include looking at the way charity collections are regulated with a view to making it easier for charities whilst protecting public confidence and deterring bogus collections and nuisance. This review will look at the red tape which we are keen to remove in order to enable charities to get on with their vital work without bureaucratic, time-consuming and unnecessary interference.

Third Sector: Finance

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will extend the duration of his Department's transition fund for charities, groups and social enterprises. [28415]

Mr Hurd: The transition fund is a short-term fund intended to provide charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises with the breathing space they need to adjust to the new spending environment. It is a chance to review the ways they are working and prepare for a future where there will be more opportunities to engage with public service. The transition fund application window is from 30 November 2010 to 21 January 2011 and grants must be spent by 31 March 2012. We have no plans to extend the duration of the fund.

Third Sector: Local Government

Mr Offord: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether his Department plans to provide guidance to local authorities on the potential of working with *(a)* charities, *(b)* voluntary groups and *(c)* social enterprises to reduce the adverse effects of the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review on the provision of local authority services. [30361]

Mr Hurd: Guidance to local authorities is a matter for the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Spending decisions are, and will continue to be, a matter for local authorities, and we do not intend to place restrictions on any decisions they, or their representative organisations, might make on funding, including grants to the voluntary sector. We and local authorities recognise the rich diversity of voluntary and community groups and their potential for delivering what people want. We do not expect authorities to respond to reductions in their budgets by passing on disproportionate cuts to other service providers, especially the voluntary sector.

The Cabinet Office works to support charities, voluntary groups and social enterprises engage with government at all levels, and to help them participate in building the Big Society. To this end, Cabinet Office has published 'Better Together', a series of case studies in conjunction with the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action, accompanied by analysis of the exposure of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector to reductions in local expenditure.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cala Homes

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he has taken external legal advice in respect of the cases which Cala Homes have brought against him. [30332]

Greg Clark: I refer the hon. Member to my answer to her on 29 November, *Official Report*, column 474W.

The legal action has necessarily required expenditure on legal services on the Cala Homes cases and the many legal cases that the Government have inherited from the last Administration.

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much his Department has spent to date on *(a)* legal advice, *(b)* court costs and *(c)* other related costs regarding the judicial review sought by Cala Homes. [30532]

Greg Clark: The issue of costs is currently before the Court.

Community Development: Business

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects to announce his plans for the future of the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative. [30760]

Robert Neill: The spending review announced that the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative would end in March 2011. Given the overriding need to reduce the deficit we could not extend the fund. We are providing local authorities with new powers, tools and incentives to drive forward regeneration and local growth as outlined in the Government's Local Growth White Paper.

I would note that the March 2010 Budget announced plans for cuts to the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative.

Council Tax

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans he has to allocate funding to local authorities for the purpose of a council tax freeze; and how much of the equivalent of a 2.5 per cent. increase in council tax he plans to allocate to local authorities for that purpose in each year of the spending review period. [30634]

Robert Neill: The Government announced in the spending review that it is making an extra £650 million available to deliver on its promise to help local authorities, including police and fire authorities, deliver a council tax freeze in England in 2011-12. The spending review also commits to providing authorities with additional funding in future years to 'lock in' the benefits of the freeze. Full details of the scheme were set out in a written ministerial statement by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 21 October, *Official Report*, column 58-59WS.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30746]

Robert Neill: The number of invoices processed by DCLG in the last 12 months for which figures are available (December 2009 to November 2010) is 42,158.

I would also direct my hon. Friend to the Department's website which published our spending over £500 from 2008-09 onwards.

Departmental Legal Opinion

Mr Raynsford: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much his Department has spent on external legal advice since 12 May 2010. [30561]

Robert Neill: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for West Bromwich East (Mr Watson), on 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 52W.

According to departmental records in the month of November £430,804 was spent on external legal services giving a total for the period between 12 May and 30 November 2010 of £1,485,166. As I indicated in the previous answer, this compares to a comparable spend of £4.8 million in 2009-10, and the new Government inherited significant ongoing legal issues from the last administration.

East London Mosque

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much funding from the public purse his Department and its agencies provided to the East London Mosque and its associated bodies in *(a)* 2007-08, *(b)* 2008-09 and *(c)* 2009-10; and for what purpose the funding was provided in each case. [29385]

Andrew Stunell: Development support to the value of £3,600 was given to the East London Mosque Trust Ltd in 2009-10 from the Department for Communities and Local Government's Communitybuilders Programme. This was used to review the financial management, business model, organisational development and social return of their multi-purpose community hub. This programme is administered by the national partner, the Adventure Capital Fund.

DCLG also provided the East London Mosque and London Muslim Centre with £47,000 through the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund between January 2006 and March 2007. This funding helped the East London Mosque and London Muslim Centre improve its internal processes, enabling it to become more efficient, transparent and accountable.

Electrical Safety

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will take steps to *(a)* encourage installation of residual current devices in domestic properties and *(b)* promote the contribution to safety of such devices. [30442]

Andrew Stunell: The Department recognises the benefits that residual current devices can provide in preventing electrocutions and electrical fires. Whenever electrical installation work is carried out in new and existing dwellings, Part P of the Building Regulations (Electrical safety in dwellings) already calls for residual current devices to be fitted in accordance with the rules in British Standard BS 7671, 'Requirements for electrical installations', or an equivalent standard. All electricians registered with Building Regulations Competent Person Schemes must comply with BS 7671.

The Department has started a review of the Building Regulations which began by identifying the changes that will ensure the regulations, including Part P, are proportionate and remain fit-for-purpose. We will be making a statement shortly on plans to consult fully on a set of detailed proposals for implementation in 2013.

The Department's Fire Kills campaign works in partnership with the Electrical Safety Council to promote key electrical fire safety messages. As part of this year's media and awareness activity, the Fire Kills campaign will be arranging and co-ordinating the inaugural Electrical Fire Safety Week, which will run from 24 to 30 January. A key element of the week will be to promote the potential life safety benefits of residual current devices to householders.

Empty Property: Demolition

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) how many empty or unfit properties were demolished with funding from his Department in each year between 1997-98 and 2009-10; [30778]

(2) what funding his Department has provided for demolition of empty or unfit properties in each year between 1997-98 and 2009-10. [30779]

Grant Shapps: This information is not collected in the form requested.

First Time Buyers: Mortgages

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many first-time buyers purchased a home with a mortgage in each month from January to December 2010. [30665]

Andrew Stunell: According to data from the Council of Mortgage Lenders, on average, 16,750 mortgages were advanced to first time buyers each month between January and October 2010. Figures for November and December 2010 are not currently available. The total number of mortgages taken out in 2010 by first time buyers (FTBs) is expected to be close to the 2009 total of 199,000.

Greater London Authority: Finance

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects to announce his plans for the future of the GLA *(a)* Capital and *(b)* Revenue Grant. [30769]

Robert Neill: Following the Local Government Finance Settlement announced on 13 December, the Secretary of State is now consulting the Mayor of London on a determination figure for the General GLA Grant of £54.969 million in 2011-12. This figure includes £9.5 million revenue funding for the London Waste and Recycling Board from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which will be incorporated in the grant.

Green Belt

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many housing developments were permitted on green belt land in *(a)* 2006-07, *(b)* 2007-08, *(c)* 2008-09 and *(d)* 2009-10; and how many hectares of green belt land were affected by such developments in each such year. [30696]

Robert Neill: Information is not held centrally on the number of housing developments permitted on the green belt. The regional spatial strategies published by the last Government also put the green belt at risk in over 30 towns and areas across England.

The Department's Land Use Change Statistics provide estimates for England of the proportion of new dwellings built within the green belt and the associated area of land developed.

The following table shows the estimates for dwellings and areas of land for each calendar year from 2006 to 2009.

Permanent dwellings completed within designated green belt, England

	New dwellings built within the green belt (percentage)	*Land changing to residential use within green belt (hectares)*
2006	2	220
2007	2	n/a
2008	2	n/a
2009[1]	2	n/a

[1] Provisional

Source:
Land Use Change Statistics

Estimates for land area changing to residential use within green belt are available only up to 2006.

Homelessness: Rochdale

Simon Danczuk: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what estimate he has made of the *(a)* short-term and *(b)* long-term effects on levels of homelessness in Rochdale of his Department's spending reductions; [30419]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effects on the incidence of antisocial behaviour in Rochdale of his Department's spending plans for homelessness services. [30420]

Grant Shapps: This Government are committed to preventing homelessness, and to tackling antisocial behaviour in all its forms.

We have protected Homelessness Grant funding, with £400 million over the spending review period. This will be made available to local authorities and the voluntary sector to support their work to tackle homelessness. We have made an additional £190 million available for discretionary housing payments and other forms of practical support alongside the Government's package of welfare reform measures. We have also minimised reductions to the Supporting People programme with £6.5 billion investment secured over the next four years.

Detailed allocations for local authorities were published on 13 December as part of the provisional local government settlement. It will be for local authorities to determine their spending priorities taking account of local circumstances. The Department for Communities and Local Government has not produced any estimates of the potential impacts of these decisions in Rochdale.

I also refer the hon. Member to my letter of 20 October 2010 on the spending review's settlement for housing, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

I am committed to looking again at how we can make it easier for both landlords and tenants to tackle antisocial behaviour more effectively and ensure that we get the correct balance between the rights of someone faced with losing their home and victims of unacceptable behaviour.

Housing: Construction

Andrew Stephenson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what proportion of the New Homes Bonus will be retained by district authorities in two-tier areas. [30457]

Grant Shapps: We are currently consulting on our proposals to implement the New Homes Bonus. Under the proposals district authorities in two tier areas will receive 80% of the bonus, with 20% going to the county. The intention is to provide a powerful fiscal incentive that will ensure that those areas which go for housing growth receive the economic benefits of growth.

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate his Department has made of the number of proposed *(a)* housing developments and *(b)* domestic dwellings with planning permission which have been cancelled since 6 May 2010. [30695]

Robert Neill: The Department has not made any estimates of the number of proposed housing developments or domestic dwellings with planning permission which have been cancelled since 6 May 2010. Once granted, planning permission is a given unless the time limits for its implementation expire; it is possible for permission to be revoked in certain circumstances, but this is exceptionally rare, and is not something that the Department maintains statistics on.

Housing: Repairs and Maintenance

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many private dwellings received Government grants towards improving their *(a)* condition and *(b)* thermal properties between 1997-98 and 2009-10. [30781]

Grant Shapps: This information is not collected in the form requested.

Housing: Standards

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 5 July 2010, *Official Report*, column 90W, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness in raising standards of housing of legislation passed in the period between 1997 and 2010; and what steps he has taken to improve housing standards and protect the rights of tenants. [29282]

Andrew Stunell: This Government are satisfied that the current legislation achieves the right balance between the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants. The previous Administration had extensive plans for the further regulation of private sector landlords, including a proposal to introduce a national register for landlords. The Government have no plans to implement those proposals as imposing new regulatory requirements on private landlords would be likely to lead to a reduction in the numbers of properties to rent, which would not help tenants or landlords. Of course, local authorities already have access to a comprehensive package of powers to deal with houses in multiple occupation and tackle the minority of rogue landlords that provide a poor service to tenants.

The new Government have also made it easier for landlords letting larger properties by removing the blanket requirement introduced by the previous Administration for planning permission to change use from a family house to a small house in multiple occupation. Such changes of use can now take place freely without the need for planning applications unless there are local concerns about such development. In such cases, local planning authorities can use existing powers to remove this freedom of movement and require planning applications for such changes of use should they consider this appropriate for their areas.

The Government do, however, believe that more can be done to raise the energy efficiency of the existing stock and recently announced measures through the Green Deal which will help raise housing standards in this respect. Further information with regard to this announcement can be viewed on the Department for Climate Change website.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government from which local authorities he has received expressions of concern regarding the distribution and composition of local enterprise partnerships; and if he will make a statement. [30530]

Robert Neill: We received sixty two proposals for local enterprise partnerships. We have asked twenty seven local enterprise partnerships to proceed towards the establishment of their board. Together, these partnerships cover about 67% of England's population. Separately, the department is also in communication with those partnerships that were not asked to proceed with their proposal. We will continue to work with them as they seek to further develop their proposals and will endeavour to address any issues of concern which are raised. We will welcome revised proposals from such places as they become ready.

Local Government Finance

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will estimate the likely change in numbers of *(a)* personal injuries and *(b)* personal injury claims attributable to reductions in local authority budgets for (i) road and pavement maintenance and (ii) building repairs over the spending review period. [30217]

Robert Neill: Local authorities are independent bodies who are directly accountable to their electorates. It is for them to decide how to spend their budgets, taking account of their responsibilities and duties. This Government have given them more freedom to do so, by ending ring-fencing of all revenue grants from 2011-12, except simplified school grants, and a new Public Health Grant from 2013. We have also significantly streamlined grant funding, by rolling around £4 billion of grants in 2010-11 into the unhypothecated formula grant and reducing grants for local government from over 90 to fewer than 10.

No assessment has been made about the effect on road accidents that may result from changes to funding related to local transport including for road maintenance. The Government continues to provide substantial funding for local transport, including for road safety.

Local Government: Co-operation

Harriett Baldwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he plans to relax the requirements for councils to report separately on trading standards, licensing and environmental health issues in respect of councils operating shared services. [29555]

Robert Neill: The Government have removed the top down local performance framework, and we are working with local government to develop a single comprehensive list of all data returns required by central Government Departments, arm's length bodies and national regulators. The list will highlight areas where there may be possibilities for further rationalisation of reporting requirements.

The Department of Communities and Local Government is working with other Government Departments and the Local Better Regulation Organisation to review, reduce and rationalise the data requests from central Government and national regulators to local government. The requirement to report on environmental health issues and trading standards licensing will be included in these reviews.

The Government are also working with the Local Government Group on its Place Based Productivity programme. This programme is exploring, amongst other things, a wide range of potential shared service models, identifying the conditions for success as well as the barriers to the expansion of shared services. Further details can be found on the Local Government Group website:

http://local.gov.uk/lgv2/core/page.do?pageId=824307

Local Government: Information Officers

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will estimate the number of press officers employed by local authorities in areas where two tiers of local government operate. [30424]

Robert Neill: It is for each council to decide the composition of its workforce, and we have no plans to make such estimates. However, as outlined in my Department's press notice of 4 June 2010, we want to see greater transparency on job descriptions and job vacancies in local government.

Mayors: Referendums

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what estimate he has made of the cost in respect of each constituency of holding a mayoral referendum on a day other than an election day; [30636]

(2) whether he plans to apply a minimum turnout percentage for the result of a mayoral referendum to be valid. [30640]

Robert Neill: My Department estimates that the cost to each local authority of holding a mayoral referendum on a day other than an election day would be around £1.50 per local government elector in the authority's area. As outlined in the Department's business plan, we intend to hold mayoral referendums in England's 12 largest cities in May 2012.

We have no plans to introduce a minimum turnout percentage for the result of such a referendum to be upheld.

Planning

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when Ministers in his Department last met representatives of Planning Aid. [30314]

Greg Clark *[holding answer 14 December 2010]*: Ministers and officials regularly meet members and officers of the Royal Town Planning Institute, which Planning Aid is a part of, and will be having further meetings shortly.

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) when he expects to announce the funding arrangements to support implementation of his proposals on neighbourhood planning; [30415]

(2) if he will provide funding to local authority planning departments to ensure they have sufficient staff with the appropriate range of skills to manage implementation and administration of the Government's proposals on neighbourhood planning. [30529]

Greg Clark: Funding for local authorities on neighbourhood planning is subject to the final outcome of the spending review process. I expect to make further announcements in due course. We have however announced details of funding for neighbourhood planning vanguards, and I am placing the associated departmental web page in the Library of the House.

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether local authorities will be entitled to assist with *(a)* consultations and *(b)* other preparations for the formulation of neighbourhood plans. [30692]

Greg Clark: The local planning authority will be entitled to assist bodies preparing neighbourhood plans.

Local authorities will also, where appropriate, arrange for the independent examination and referendum in relation to proposed plans and orders.

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) with what powers he proposes to enable local communities to determine applications for new wind farms; [30772]

(2) what powers he proposes to give to communities to determine permission for the construction of new roads through a neighbourhood; [30783]

(3) what powers he plans to grant to communities to determine permission for operation of incinerators. [30786]

Greg Clark: The Localism Bill provides for decisions to be taken as closely as possible to the people they affect and will deliver a radical transfer of power to local communities and their councils. Our proposals for neighbourhood planning will enable local communities to permit developments without the need for planning applications subject to a limited number of conditions and exceptions. These are set out respectively in Schedules 4B and 9 of the Localism Bill. The effect of these is that neighbourhood planning will not be able to permit certain developments, including wind farms with a generating capacity more than 50 megawatts, nationally significant highways within the meaning of the Planning Act 2008 and incinerators.

Planning: Referendums

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether his proposals for referendums on neighbourhood planning will provide for postal and proxy voting. [30785]

Greg Clark: The detail of the process for undertaking a referendum for the purposes of neighbourhood planning will be set out in regulations, following the passage of the Localism Bill. We will consider the issues of postal and proxy voting in drawing up those regulations.

Religious Buildings: Planning Permission

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what powers he plans to grant communities to determine permission for the construction or extension of a place of worship in a neighbourhood. [30784]

Greg Clark: The neighbourhood planning system being introduced by the Localism Bill will give communities the ability to produce neighbourhood development plans and neighbourhood development orders. Plans will set out policies for the development and use of land in a specified neighbourhood area and orders will grant planning permission for certain types or classes of development in that neighbourhood area.

The basic conditions that draft plans and orders must meet will be that they are appropriate having regard to national policy, are in general conformity with the local authority's strategic policies in the development plan (excluding neighbourhood plans), and are compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements.

Where no orders exist, an application for planning permission can be made to the local planning authority to be determined in the conventional manner.

Right to Buy Scheme

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what his Department's policy is on the right of council tenants to buy their homes. [30321]

Andrew Stunell: The Government support the Right to Buy scheme, which has helped nearly two million council tenants to realise their aspiration to own their homes, and are committed to helping social tenants and other first time buyers to own or part-own their home.

Social Rented Housing: Empty Property

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate he has made of the number of under-occupied properties of each type in the social rented sector; and how many families under-occupying properties in that sector are resident in properties on the fifth floor or above of tower blocks. [30014]

Andrew Stunell: There were an estimated 400,000 under-occupied houses and 20,000 under-occupied flats in the social rented sector in 2008, as measured by the bedroom standard. These estimates are based on data from the 2008 English Housing Survey.

The number of families under-occupying properties on the fifth floor or above of tower blocks is not available due to the very small number of such cases in the survey samples. It is estimated that less than 1% of the total number of under-occupying social rented sector households live in such accommodation.

Supporting People Programme

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment his Department has made of the effects of reductions in the Supporting People programme budget. [29744]

Andrew Stunell: The spending review has secured £6.5 billion of funding for Supporting People over the next four years, as part of our commitment to protect services for vulnerable people. As part of the spending review an equality impact assessment on supporting people has now been published. However, all decisions and the impact of them on services to be provided with the funding available is a matter for the local authority. In making changes local authorities must ensure they comply with any legal requirements including carrying out equality impact assessments.

Voluntary Organisations: Finance

Simon Danczuk: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent discussions he has had with local authorities on their likely level of funding for *(a)* the voluntary sector and *(b)* implementation of the Big Society policy in 2011-12. [30421]

Greg Clark: I refer the hon. Member to my speech to the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives conference of 14 October 2010. I have placed a copy of the associated departmental press notice in the Library of the House. Ministers have had, and will have, a series of discussions with local councils on the Local Government Funding Settlement.

DEFENCE

Departmental Manpower

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many of his Department's staff based in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Northern Ireland were in the civil service redeployment pool on the latest date for which figures are available; [30324]

(2) how many of his Department's staff based in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Northern Ireland have been redeployed from the civil service redeployment pool in the last month; [30326]

(3) how many of his Department's staff based in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Northern Ireland who were in the civil service redeployment pool on the latest date for which figures are available had been in that pool for more than six months. [30327]

Mr Robathan: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) manages its surplus staff by using the redeployment pool (RDP). This service enables those who are or who will become surplus to be given priority consideration for vacancies. Staff in the RDP usually continue working in their last directorate or are redeployed to cover short-term tasks. On average, staff spend six months in the RDP before finding a post or leaving the Department. The RDP is also used by staff returning from overseas postings, including civilians supporting the armed forces in operational theatres. The MOD is currently subject to a freeze on external recruitment and the RDP helps us to fill vacancies from within existing staff resources.

Data on the RDP are collected on a quarterly basis; the latest available data are as at 1 October 2010 and shows that on that date the numbers of staff in the RDP were:

Government office region	*October 2010 headcount*
Other UK Northern Ireland	1,090.75
UK Total	1,160

Source:
DASA (Quad-Service)

As at 1 October 2010, the numbers of civil servants who had been in the RDP for more than six months were:

Government office region	*October 2010 headcount*
Other UK	430
Northern Ireland	40
UK Total	470

Source:
DASA (Quad-Service)

The following table shows the number of staff who left the RDP in the month prior to October 2010 broken down into Northern Ireland and remaining areas of the UK and whether they exited the RDP to another post within the MOD, or left the MOD as a whole.

Government office region	*October 2010 headcount*
UK	150
Total remained in MOD on leaving RDP	105
Exited MOD on leaving RDP	45
Other UK	150
Remained in MOD on leaving RDP	105
Exited MOD on leaving RDP	45
Northern Ireland	[1]
Remained in MOD on leaving RDP	[1]
Exited MOD on leaving RDP	[1]

[1] Less than 5.

Notes:

1. Totals exclude 10 personnel based in overseas posts or whose location is unknown.
2. Totals have been individually rounded to the nearest 5, and may not sum precisely to overall totals.
3. Data are based on redeployment pool strengths as taken from the MOD human resources management system (HRMS) on the first working day of the month.

Source:
DASA (Quad: Service)

Departmental Public Expenditure

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence by what means he plans to meet the proposed £4.3 billion target for non-front line savings announced in the strategic defence and security review; and if he will make a statement. [30604]

Dr Fox: The strategic defence and security review identified new non-front line savings of at least £4.3 billion over the spending review period, to remedy the financial position inherited from the previous Government. The key areas are:

reductions in the civilian work force and non-front line service personnel

rationalisation of the Defence Estate including the sale of surplus land and buildings and associated running cost reductions and running cost savings across the estate of up to £350 million per year including a revised approach to the way in which we manage and deliver infrastructure services across the estate

sales of assets such as the Defence Support Group and the Marchwood Sea Mounting Centre and the Defence stake in the telecommunications spectrum should generate in excess of £500 million over the spending review period

efficiencies and improvements in military training including the increased use of simulators for air-crew and Army live firing

saving significant amounts from contract re-negotiations with Defence industry

cutting over £300 million per year by 2014-15 of service and civilian personnel allowances

reductions in our spend on commodities including substantial savings on food, energy and professional services

reductions in spend on media and communications.

Overall, this represents a 25% reduction in non-front line organisations such as headquarters, support roles, and organisations such as Defence Equipment and Support saving at least £2 billion per year by 2014-15.

Final options and savings figures will depend on detailed implementation, which will generally be subject to full consultation with all relevant parties, including the trade unions and the devolved Administrations, as well as the results of mandatory assessments on the impact that the measures will have on sustainability, equality and diversity and health and safety. The Ministry of Defence is therefore not prepared to release more detailed information at this time.

EU Law

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by his Department; and what estimate he has made of the cost of each such transposition. [27498]

Mr Gerald Howarth: The Ministry of Defence has one EU directive pending transposition into domestic legislation, namely the Defence and Security Directive (2009/81/EC) which sets out new procurement rules for contracting authorities/entities which purchase military equipment, sensitive equipment, and related goods, works or services. It also provides rules where contracting authorities/entities purchase works and services for specifically military purposes or works or services for security purposes which involve, require or contain classified information. The purpose of the rules is to meet the concerns of member states about the sensitive nature of procurements in the defence and security sectors. Currently, all public sector procurements (civil and defence), unless they are exempt, are governed by the rules set out in the Public Procurement Directive (2004/18/EC) or the Utilities Directive (2004/17/EC). The standard rules in the 2004 directives do not always permit the acquisition of military or security capability as effectively as they could, or deal explicitly with key requirements for acquisition such as security of information.

The directive was agreed by the British Government when it was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union on 13 July 2009.

We estimate that the direct cost to the Department of transposing this directive has so far amounted to £325,000.

Iraq Committee of Inquiry

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures his Department has put in place to protect US interests during the Iraq inquiry. [29344]

Dr Fox: The protocol agreed between the Government and the Iraq inquiry regarding documents and other written and electronic information provides for certain categories of sensitive information to be protected if release would cause harm or damage to the UK public interest. The protocol can be viewed on the Cabinet Office website at the following address:

http://download.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/iraq-protocol/protocol.pdf

A copy has been placed in the Library of the House.

There are no additional measures—and none specifically related to the United States—in place.

Military Bases

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which defence establishments had a complement of 1,000 or more service personnel on the latest date for which figures are available. [26363]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 25 November 2010]*: Details of service personnel employed in each region of the UK are shown in the Defence Analytical Services Agency publication TSP 10, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House.

A breakdown of service personnel employed at individual establishments is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Navy

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he consulted NATO on the proposed closure of RAF bases as part of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. [29264]

Mr Gerald Howarth: The Ministry of Defence consulted NATO allies on a range of issues, but this did not include consultation on RAF basing options.

Trident

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish in full the Trident replacement value-for-money review. [29989]

Dr Fox *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 8 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 283W, to the hon. Members for Harwich and North Essex (Mr Jenkin), for Islington North (Jeremy Corbyn) and for Wells (Tessa Munt).

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Drugs

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on what dates he has attended meetings of ministerial committees on drugs issues since his appointment. [30410]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I have regular meetings with the Home Secretary, Ministers, Cabinet and Cabinet Committees.

Kazakhstan

Mr Blunkett: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he received representations on *(a)* asylum in or immigration to the UK and *(b)* UK residents from Kazakhstan from (i) politicians and (ii) officials on his recent visit to Kazakhstan; and if he will make a statement. [30888]

The Deputy Prime Minister: During my visit for the Astana Organisation for Security and co-operation in Europe summit on 1-2 December, no representations were made to me by Kazakhstani politicians or officials on either asylum in or immigration to the UK or UK residents from Kazakhstan.

School Sport Partnerships

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which schools sport partnerships he has visited in an official capacity since his appointment. [30411]

The Deputy Prime Minister: Since May 2010 I have visited four schools in England. However none of my visits have had school sports as their primary purpose.

West Lothian

Simon Kirby: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to establish a commission to consider the West Lothian question; and if he will make a statement. [30358]

Mr Harper: We are continuing to give careful consideration to the timing, composition, scope and remit of the Commission. Its work will need to take account of our proposals to reform the House of Lords to create a wholly or mainly elected second chamber, the changes being made to the way this House does business and amendments to the devolution regimes, for example in the Scotland Bill presently before the House. We will make an announcement in the new year.

EDUCATION

Children: Communication Skills

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will meet representatives of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists to discuss communication disorder in children; and if he will make a statement. [23618]

Sarah Teather: The Secretary of State has already met representatives of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists along with other organisations concerned with speech, language and communication needs. The Government's forthcoming Green Paper on special educational needs and disabilities will look at how support for children and young people, including those with speech, language and communication needs and their families, can be improved.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent estimate he has made of the number of children of each *(a)* age group and *(b)* sex in each local education authority area who have been diagnosed with a communication disorder; and if he will make a statement. [23619]

Sarah Teather: Information on the diagnosis of communication disorders is not available.

A table showing the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs, or at School Action Plus whose primary need has been identified as speech, language and communication needs has been placed in the House Libraries.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Biofuels

Neil Parish: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department plans to take steps to encourage the recycling of *(a)* used cooking oil and *(b)* other waste streams into biodiesel. [27796]

Norman Baker: I have been asked to reply.

Used cooking oil (UCO) is already eligible to receive certificates under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation, which sets annual targets for biofuel use in the UK. In addition the supply of UCO is currently encouraged by a 20p lower rate on fuel duty.

The European Renewable Energy Directive (RED) requires the UK to source 10% of transport energy from renewable sources by 2020.

We are currently working to amend the RTFO to fulfil the requirements of the RED and will be consulting on measures to implement the RED shortly. The RED provides support for biofuels made from waste, including UCO, by double counting the contribution they make towards national targets.

Dairy Farming

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assistance her Department provides for the promotion of sustainable dairy farms; and if she will make a statement. [29952]

Mr Paice: DEFRA is spending £3.7 billion over a seven-year period through the Rural Development Programme for England. This supports farmers and foresters to deliver environmentally beneficial land management practices, to modernise, and to adapt to changing circumstances.

DEFRA has worked closely with The High Level Group for Dairy which was launched in October 2009 following significant market difficulties in Europe. The European Commission made legislative proposals which aim to prepare the sector for a more market oriented and sustainable future on 9 December 2010 following the High Level Group's recommendations.

I chair the Dairy Supply Chain Forum which brings together major industry figures to discuss and resolve common challenges. The Forum has led to the Milk Roadmap, the first stage of a comprehensive action plan to help the sector address its environmental impacts.

Electric Shock Collars

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on the introduction of a ban on the use of electric shock training devices for dogs. [29349]

Mr Paice: There are no current plans to ban the use of electronic training aids for animals. The Animal Welfare Act 2006 already makes it an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any animal or to treat an animal in a way that fails to meet its welfare needs. It also provides additional powers to prohibit the use of any such equipment through secondary legislation if considered necessary.

However, we recognise the need for further research into this issue. DEFRA is currently carrying out a study into whether electronic training collars cause unnecessary suffering, and this will be completed next year.

Slaughterhouses

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* departmental circulars and *(b)* other documents her Department has published consequent on the provisions of legislation regulating slaughterhouses in each of the last 10 years; what assessment she has made of the adequacy of enforcement of such legislation; how many persons of each (i) age, (ii) sex and (iii) police force area have been (A) prosecuted and (B) convicted of an offence under the provisions of such legislation in each of the last three years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [29837]

Mr Paice: Guidance on the welfare of poultry at slaughter was issued in December 2007 and DEFRA guidance on licensing and training of slaughtermen was last updated in May 2010.

Enforcement of welfare in slaughterhouses is the responsibility of the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The FSA conducted a survey of all approved slaughterhouses in May 2010 to establish whether food business operators are taking active steps to comply with legal requirements and achieve the necessary animal welfare standards. The survey also looked at whether Official Veterinarians and frontline teams are carrying out their roles effectively, with appropriate monitoring and relevant enforcement being taken in the event of food business operator non-compliance. This survey indicated standards of animal welfare met or exceeded legislative requirements in 94% of premises surveyed.

Details of prosecutions and convictions for offences under the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995 (as amended) are as follows:

Case	*Result*	*Sex*	*Age*	*Court area*
April 2007 to March 2008				
1.	Convicted	[1]—	[1]—	Reedley magistrates court
2.	Convicted	Male	47	North East Derbyshire and the Dales magistrates court
3.	Convicted	Male	53	Halifax magistrates court
4.	Convicted	Male	46	Halifax magistrates court
5.	Convicted	[1]—	[1]—	Bradford magistrates court

[1] Company.

TRANSPORT

Aviation: Pilots

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will assess the merits of introducing equivalent security arrangements for airline pilots at airports to those in place for hon. Members on the parliamentary estate. [29689]

Mrs Villiers: Aviation security search measures apply equally to all (passengers, airport staff and aircrew including pilots) regardless of gender, race, age and occupation, with only a very limited number of exemptions, for example in respect of Heads of State. The more people we exempt from search, the greater the risk this creates.

We would be wary of creating a two tier screening system that may increase the likelihood of people becoming targets for coercion. Even professional pilots with the highest levels of integrity and honesty can find themselves the subject of coercion or blackmail from those who might seek to force them to carry prohibited items into a critical part of an airport.

All screening measures are kept under review. The Department for Transport has regular dialogue with industry partners, including representatives of airline pilots, to ensure that security measures are commensurate with the existing threat.

It is not appropriate for me to comment on the threat to or security procedures in place across the parliamentary estate.

Aviation: Security

Mr Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to introduce body scanners in the crew search channels at UK airports. [28615]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport is currently considering responses to a public consultation on the 'Code of Practice for the Acceptable Use of Security Scanners' in the UK. A decision on the future use of security scanners will be made in due course.

Mr Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had on the introduction of a pilot scheme to increase the speed of the security clearance process at airports for UK airline pilots. [28617]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport specifies the standards that must be met, and the methods that may be used by industry in respect of the screening of passengers and staff, including pilots. But the efficiency and speed at which people are processed through security screening is a matter for airport operators.

Gareth Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on revisions of EU security rules on the searching of religious headwear at airports; and if he will make a statement. [28640]

Mrs Villiers: My officials are in close contact with the Commission about this sensitive issue and are making progress towards a solution. They wrote to the Commission on 3 December 2010 requesting agreement to an 18 month trial at all UK airports for the screening, on entry to a Security Restricted Area, of the headwear of passengers and all other persons who are not readily able to remove it for religious, cultural or practical reasons, and for whom the touching of the headgear by hand is considered unacceptable.

Consultants

Maria Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much his Department has spent on consultants since May 2010; [30802]

(2) what assessment he has made of the potential to reduce the costs of consultants to his Department. [30803]

Norman Baker: The Department introduced strict controls on consultancy and contractors in May 2010, including an approvals process for any proposed new or renewed contracts. These must be approved by the directors of HR and finance and estates. Final approval for contracts over £20,000 is required from the Secretary of State. The latest available figures for October 2010 show that the central Department has reduced year to date expenditure on consultants in 2010-11 by some £18 million or 46% when compared with the same period in the previous year.

The Department has spent £24,710,000 on consultants since the beginning of May 2010.

Cruise Liner Port: Liverpool

Alison McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what recent representations his Department has received on cruise liner port facilities in Liverpool; [30036]

(2) what recent discussions his Department has had with *(a)* representatives of the European Commission, *(b)* European trade associations and *(c)* UK companies on cruise liner port facilities in Liverpool. [30037]

Mike Penning: The Department for Transport has not recently had any discussions with representatives of the European Commission or any European trade associations about cruise liner facilities in Liverpool.

However, I am considering a proposal recently received from Liverpool city council requesting that the grant condition which allows only port of call use at the Liverpool Cruise terminal should be relaxed so that the facility is able to operate turnaround cruise.

I have also had correspondence on this topic from the right hon. Members for Blackburn (Mr Straw), for Southampton Itchen (Mr Denham) and for Eastleigh (Chris Huhne); from the hon. Members for Wirral West (Esther McVey) and for St Helens North (Mr Watts); and from Jacqueline Foster MEP and Brian Simpson MEP. Questions have also been answered to the hon. Member for Liverpool Riverside (Mrs Ellman) on 3 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 801W, as well as questions from hon. Members for Liverpool Walton (Steve Rotheram) and for Wirral South on 28 October 2010, *Official Report*, columns 455-56.

Dartford-Thurrock Crossing: Tolls

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ring-fence a proportion of the additional income attributable to increased tolls on the Dartford Crossing for future capital expenditure on the crossing. [27375]

Mike Penning *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* Income from road user charges at the Dartford Crossing are already ring-fenced for investment in transport, including improvements to the crossing. We have no intention to further ring-fence such income.

We have made clear that investment at Dartford is an absolute priority, and increasing the charges as proposed, allows for future investment at the crossing, including the implementation of free-flow charging technology, and to help fund proposals for a new, additional crossing.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts, in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28107]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport plans to comply fully with the range of measures being put in place across Government to make procurement easier for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This includes the introduction of a simpler standardised pre-qualification questionnaire and use of Contracts Finder to advertise opportunities from March 2011.

Departmental Equality

Maria Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Brighton Pavilion of 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 21W, on departmental equality, (1) on what date he plans to publish the equality impact assessments referred to; [26885]

(2) for what reasons the publication of the equality impact assessments will take place after the publication of his proposals. [26956]

Mr Philip Hammond *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* The spending review has set out the policies the Department intends to take forward. Equality impact assessments are being used where appropriate to inform the development of detailed measures and will be published when these detailed measures have been agreed.

Departmental Manpower

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fixed-term appointments his Department has made since May 2010. [30942]

Norman Baker: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 22W.

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff have been employed in his Department in each month since April 2010. [30944]

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff were employed by his Department in each month since April 2010. [30796]

Norman Baker: The central Department and its agencies identified the following number of staff employed by the Department in each month between May 2010 and 30 November 2010. The totals include both permanent and non-permanent employees and the figures represent full-time equivalents (FTEs).

2010	*Total number of staff*
May	18,609.5
June	18,578.1
July	18,456.2
August	18,313.2
September	18,186.5
October	18,076.0
November	17,975.3

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the change in the number of staff in his Department was between *(a)* 1 May 2010 and *(b)* the latest date for which figures are available. [30797]

Norman Baker: The central Department and its agencies identified the following change in the number of staff between 1 May 2010 and 30 November 2010. This includes both permanent and non-permanent staff.

	Number
Total staff (full-time equivalents) in May 2010	18,609.5
Total staff (full-time equivalents) in November 2010	17,975.3
Reduction in staff (full-time equivalents) numbers	634.2

Departmental Public Expenditure

David Mowat: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's capital expenditure per head was in *(a)* London and *(b)* the North West in each of the last five years. [28831]

Norman Baker: Details of the Department for Transport's regional expenditure is published by HM Treasury in its Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses which is available online at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/
pespub_country_regional_analysis.htm

Those tables show the following levels of capital expenditure by the Department for Transport per head for London and the North West in each of the last five financial years.

These figures use residential population as the denominator for the calculation of expenditure per head. This means that they will not reflect the level of net non-resident in-commuters using the transport network, which in the 2001 census were estimated as 1.1 million people for London, and 0.2 million for the North West.

		£ per head
	London	*North West*
2005-06	85	53
2006-07	111	79
2007-08	107	83
2008-09	101	90
2009-10	93	95

These figures exclude grant to local authorities, as this information is collated separately the Department for Communities and Local Government, Department for Children, Schools and Families, Department for Work and Pensions and devolved Administrations.

The expenditure per head has been calculated using the latest Office for National Statistics residential population estimates for the relevant year and region. The Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis analysis on the HM Treasury website was produced using an earlier set of population estimates and so the figures presented here will be slightly different.

Departmental Written Questions

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many and what proportion of questions tabled to the Secretary of State for written answer on a named day were answered substantively before or on the day named for answer *(a)* in Session 2009-10 and *(b)* since May 2010; how many such questions tabled between May 2010 and 12 November 2010 had not received a substantive answer by 18 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to his Department of answering a question for written answer on a named day on the day named for answer in the latest period for which figures are available. [25971]

Norman Baker: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The Government have committed to providing the Procedure Committee with sessional statistics in a standard format on the time take to respond to written parliamentary questions for the 2009-10 Session. This information will be submitted to the Procedure Committee shortly.

(b) The Department for Transport received 317 questions for written answer on a named day between May 2010 and 15 November 2010 (this includes questions tabled up to the 12 November), of which 180 (56%) were answered on time. Of the remainder, nine had not received a substantive answer by 18 November 2010.

HM Treasury conducts an annual indexation exercise of the cost of written and oral parliamentary questions. The estimated costs that have applied from 20 January 2010 are:

Written questions: £154

Oral questions: £425

The Treasury, in making its assessment of the cost of answering questions, does not differentiate between the types of written questions.

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many and what proportion of questions tabled to the Secretary of State for ordinary written answer *(a)* in Session 2009-10 and *(b)* since May 2010 were answered within (i) seven days and (ii) 14 days of tabling; how many such questions tabled between May 2010 and 12 November 2010 remained unanswered by 18 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to his Department of answering a question for ordinary written answer within seven days of tabling in the latest period for which figures are available. [25972]

Norman Baker: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The Government has committed to providing the Procedure Committee with sessional statistics in a standard format on the time take to respond to written parliamentary questions for the 2009-10 Session. This information will be submitted to the Procedure Committee shortly.

(b) Between May 2010 and 15 November 2010 the Department for Transport received 1,035 ordinary written PQs (this includes questions tabled up to the 12 November), of which 479 (46%) were answered within five sitting days. Of the remainder, 90 PQs remained unanswered by 18 November 2010. The Department does not routinely record whether PQs are answered within either seven or 14 days and this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

HM Treasury conducts an annual indexation exercise of the cost of written and oral parliamentary questions. The estimated costs that have applied from 20 January 2010 are:

Written questions: £154

Oral questions: £425

The Treasury, in making its assessment of the cost of answering questions, does not differentiate between the types of written questions.

Employment: Finance

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total cost of employment of staff in his Department was in 2009-10; and what estimate has been made of such costs in each year from 2010-11 to 2014-15. [30798]

Norman Baker: The 2009-10 wages and salaries figure for the Department for Transport, which was published in the departmental resource accounts, was £546,266,100.

Following the spending review settlement for the Department for Transport, detailed work force plans and pay bill allocations, on which such estimates for costs in each year from 2010-11 to 2014-15 would be based, are being developed and finalised. We are therefore currently unable to provide estimates of these costs.

First Great Western: Standards

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the most recent performance data for First Great Western. [29270]

Mrs Villiers: Department of Transport officials meet First Great Western every four weeks to discuss franchise performance. The latest figures published by Network Rail show that, in the four weeks to 16 October 2010, First Great Western's punctuality was 91.7% and for the 12 months to that date was 91.6%.

M42: Road Traffic Control

Mr Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effect of the operation of active traffic management between junctions 3a and 7 of the M42 on *(a)* the number of crashes and injuries, *(b)* levels of vehicle emissions, *(c)* average speeds of vehicles and *(d)* vehicle capacity *in the latest period for which figures are available.* [29204]

Mike Penning: An assessment of the benefits of active traffic management (ATM) between junctions 3A and 7 of the M42 was made following twelve months of operation of hard shoulder running (HSR). This assessment showed that:

(a) The average number of personal injury accidents (PIAs) reduced from 5.08 per month before the implementation of ATM to 1.83 per month following the introduction of HSR. The average number of casualties reduced from 8.48 per month before the implementation of ATM to 4.00 per month following the introduction of HSR.

(b) The effect of ATM on emissions from all vehicles was:

Carbon monoxide (CO) -4%

Particulate Matter (PM) -10%

Hydrocarbons (HC) +3%

Carbon-dioxide (CO_2) -4%

Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x) -5%

Fuel consumption -4%

(c) When HSR was operated at 50mph the average traffic speed was 49mph. When HSR was subsequently operated at 60mph the average traffic speed increased by 5 mph compared with HSR at 50mph.

(d) The operation of HSR on the M42 ATM section increased the observed capacity of the motorway by an average of 7% compared to conditions before the implementation of ATM.

Motor Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to encourage uptake of low-emission vehicles. [27938]

Norman Baker: The spending review announced provision of over £400 million for measures promoting the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicle technologies. These measures include:

Support for consumer incentives for electric and other ultra-low emission cars throughout the life of this Parliament. The Secretary of State for Transport has already announced details of the Plug-In Car Grant, which will reduce the upfront cost of eligible cars by 25%, capped at £5,000. Available across the UK, the scheme will be open to both private consumers and business buyers. We will continue to monitor the most effective way to deliver support for consumer incentives, with the first review of the Plug-In Car Grant taking place in 2012.

Continued investment in electric vehicle recharging infrastructure through the 'Plugged-in Places' scheme. The Government are committed to mandating a national recharging network for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. Data derived from the Plugged-in Places programme will inform the design of a national network.

Further investment in research and development activities supporting this next generation of vehicle technologies.

We regard promotion of low-emission vehicles as important to achieve our carbon-reduction targets.

Motorways: Road Traffic Control

Mr Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what changes in the specification for Active Traffic Management (ATM) have been proposed for future use of ATM on the motorway network; and if he will publish the report on the basis of which such changes were made. [29205]

Mike Penning: The Highways Agency is considering the design of Active Traffic Management (ATM) in *view of the experience gained from operating the pilot* section on the M42. This includes what reduction can be made in the provision of gantries, signing, emergency refuge areas and signalling which will reduce costs but maintain the level of safety.

The M42 ATM pilot operation of a Managed Motorway has shown that opening the hard shoulder to peak time traffic, with speed limit controls in place, improves reliability and reduces the number of accidents. The Highways Agency has demonstrated that Managed Motorways can deliver a substantial proportion of the benefits of conventional road-widening solutions, while securing cost savings of 40%, and the agency is aiming to increase these savings still further by driving efficiencies in how it specifies and delivers projects, encouraging the introduction of standardised solutions.

The evidence base drawn together so far through the experience gained from operating the M42 pilot and sections on the Birmingham Box, has enabled more cost-effective designs to be introduced for future schemes. The agency has shown that it can operate hard shoulder running at 60 mph, and extend the distances between gantries and emergency refuge areas, without adversely affecting the operation of the road or the safety of the road user.

Network Rail: Pensions

Karl McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what pension provision has been made for the former *(a)* chief executive, *(b)* chairman and *(c)* board members of Network Rail; what expenditure his Department incurred in respect of such pensions in 2009-10; what his Department's role was in establishing such pension provision; what pension provision has been made for the (i) interim chief executive and (ii) new chairman of Network Rail; and if he will make a statement. [29123]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 6 December 2010]*: The Secretary of State for Transport has not been involved in making or establishing any provision, nor has he incurred any expenditure, in respect of pensions for former or future chief executives, the chairman and board members of Network Rail. The operation of Network Rail's pay and pension arrangements is a matter for the company and its members, overseen by the Office of Rail Regulation.

Railways: Concessions

Karl McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many former employees of *(a)* British Rail, *(b)* the Strategic Rail Authority and *(c)* Railtrack receive (i) free and (ii) concessionary rail travel. [28583]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: Around 500,000 former employees of British Rail, the Strategic Rail Authority and Railtrack receive concessionary rail travel. Concessionary travel includes free and discounted concessionary rail travel.

Karl McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* current and *(b)* former *employees of* (i) British Rail, (ii) the Strategic Rail Authority and (iii) Railtrack receive (A) free rail travel and (B) travel concessions for members of their family who did not work for these organisations. [28584]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 3 December 2010]:* Family members of some 500,000 current and former employees of British Rail, the Strategic Rail Authority and Railtrack have entitlement to free and concessionary travel. This facility is (and was) not dependant on where those family members worked. Concessionary travel includes free and discounted concessionary rail travel.

Karl McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport from which budgets the costs associated with the provision of free and concessionary travel for current and former employees of *(a)* British Rail, *(b)* the Strategic Rail Authority and *(c)* Railtrack are met; and what such costs were in 2009-10. [29122]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* There is no central budget for the provision of free and concessionary travel. The costs are met by employers. As the expenditure is incurred by commercial companies, it would not be appropriate to disclose what they might spend.

The Department for Transport incurred costs of approximately £36,000 during 2009-10 in relation to concessionary travel costs for current employees who were former employees of British Rail. The Department also has a historic obligation to pay the travel costs of former pre-privatisation BR employees. The cost for this in 2009-2010 was approximately £2.77 million.

Railways: Construction

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had on the proposed High Speed 2 rail link; and if he will make a statement. [26830]

Mr Philip Hammond *[holding answer 30 November 2010]:* The full listing of my meetings with external organisations is available at:

www.dft.gov.uk/press/ministers/transparency/

In addition, I meet regularly with HS2 Ltd and officials to discuss high speed rail.

Railways: Finance

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the oral statement of 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 466-8, on rail investment, what improvement work he plans to be undertaken in respect of *(a)* the Midland Main Line, *(b)* Yorkshire, *(c)* Trans-Pennine routes, *(d)* Manchester and *(e)* South Wales. [29304]

Mrs Villiers: The improvement work for the Midland Main Line, Yorkshire, Trans-Pennine routes, Manchester and South Wales is set out in the Network Rail enhancement plan for control period 4, which covers 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2014. Funding for all these programmes of enhancements to deliver additional capacity, reliability and faster journeys has been confirmed. The details of scope and timing may change as the plans for improved train services are developed by train operators.

Railways: Industrial Disputes

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on rail franchise agreements permitting payments to be made to train operating companies in the event of a dispute with a trade union; and what the criteria are for determining such payments. [29127]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* At the discretion of the Secretary of State for Transport, the Department can reimburse train operating companies for net losses incurred as a result of industrial action, provided the train operating company involved can demonstrate that it has taken all reasonable steps to avoid industrial action and mitigate its effects.

Railways: Standards

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the level of train punctuality in the latest period for which figures are available. [28604]

Mrs Villiers: Transport Ministers meet senior rail industry officials on a regular basis to discuss train performance. Period 7 (19 September to 16 October 2010) is the latest period for which confirmed figures are available when the Public Performance Measure (PPM) for England and Wales was 92.7% and the Public Performance Measure Moving Annual Average (PPM MAA) was 91.6%. The PPM MAA is 0.2 PPM points better than at period 7 the previous year.

Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation

Neil Parish: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department's consultation on the renewable transport fuel obligation will seek to assess the merits of including hydrogen under that scheme. [27795]

Norman Baker: The Renewable Energy Directive requires all European member states to source 10% of the energy used in transport from renewable sources by 2020. While the directive does allow for the use of renewable hydrogen to meet this target, there is not currently a methodology in place for calculating the contribution of hydrogen from renewable sources. However, the directive does require the European Commission to come forward with a proposal for such a method by 31 December 2011.

The renewable transport fuel obligation requires fossil fuel suppliers to supply a certain percentage of the total volume of fuel they supply as biofuel. We are currently working to amend the RTFO to fulfil the requirements of the Renewable Energy Directive and will consult on proposals shortly.

Roads: Snow and Ice

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he last updated the guidance provided by his Department to local authorities on winter resilience. [28527]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 3 December 2010]:* In response to David Quarmby's final report on Winter Resilience, published in October 2010, the Department for Transport worked with the UK Roads Liaison Group to develop guidance to help local highway authorities to improve their winter service. The guidance, published on 3 November 2010, focuses on the planning, preparation and effective use of salt stocks and other resources, and is available to download at:

http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/pdfs/Winter%20Service%20for%20Local%20Authority%20Practitioners%20v7.pdf

The Secretaries of State for Transport and Communities and Local Government jointly wrote to the leaders of all English local authorities on 12 November drawing their attention to this guidance and the other recommendations from David Quarmby's independent review.

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) which local highway authorities have fewer than 48 runs of salt capacity; [29044]

(2) whether he plans to convene the Salt Cell in response to the weather in November and December 2010; [29047]

(3) if he will assess the ability of *(a)* local highway authorities and *(b)* the Highways Authority to keep key roads open in the event of a prolonged period of severe winter weather. [29048]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* The independent review on winter resilience led by David Quarmby CBE published its report in October 2010. The report made a number of recommendations both for the Government, local highway authorities and others.

One of the recommendations was for a benchmark of 12 days (48 runs) pre-season salt stockholding to be adopted for local highway authorities. It was recognised by the Review that some authorities would not be able to implement this recommendation in the short term, but in these cases they should carefully review their salt usage history and consider further action if necessary, such as increasing capacity or mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring authorities.

To bolster national resilience, for the first time the Highways Agency is putting in place a 250,000 tonne national strategic reserve of last resort, available to support local authority operators as necessary, along with a further 60,000 tonnes as its own reserve. So overall, we are better prepared than last year should the recent bad weather re-occur.

However, we are not complacent. The Department has arrangements in place for regular monitoring of salt stocks, so that we can identify risks early on and take any further action, including initiating Salt Cell should the need arise.

Given that much of the country has been hit unusually early this winter by severe weather, the Secretary of State has asked David Quarmby to take the opportunity to conduct an urgent audit of highway authorities' and transport operators' recent performance in England, their progress in implementing his recommendations and any further steps that need to be taken.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

Government Equalities Office: Finance

Pat Glass: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what the change in the budget of the Government Equalities Office will be in *(a)* nominal and *(b)* real terms between 2010-11 and each year from 2011-12 to 2014-15; and what proportion of the Office's budget will be allocated to the Equality and Human Rights Commission in each year from 2010-11 to 2014-15. [30313]

Lynne Featherstone: The recent spending review settlement, covering the next four years, allocated a nominal budget to the Government Equalities Office as follows:

£ million nominal

	Baseline 2010-11	*2011-12*	*2012-13*	*2013-14*	*2014-15*
RDEL[1]	69.5	66.0	62.6	55.5	47.3
o/w non ring-fenced RDEL	69.0	65.4	62.0	54.8	46.5
o/w depreciation ring-fenced in RDEL	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7
Administration Budget	44.2	45.9	41.9	34.1	25.2
o/w non ring-fenced RDEL administration budget	44.2	45.9	41.9	34.1	25.2
Capital	7.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5

[1] RDEL: resource departmental expenditure limit

Note:

Please note that numbers may not sum exactly due to rounding.

The allocation in real terms has not yet been published.

The budget allocation for the Equality and Human Rights Commission is currently in negotiation.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Annuities

Rachel Reeves: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he is considering the open market option as part of his Department's review of removing the requirement to annuitise by the age of 75 years. [29291]

Mr Hoban: I have been asked to reply.

The Government believe that it is important that people understand that they have the right to shop around and that those who stand to benefit exercise this option. The recent HM Treasury consultation 'Removing the requirement to annuities by age 75' included a question on how to improve advice to individuals regarding their choices on pension savings.

HM Treasury recently published its response to the age 75 consultation alongside draft Finance Bill legislation on 9 December. It is concerned with the tax and regulatory reforms associated with the new decumulation regimes and does not include changes to the Open Market

Option (OMO). However, the Government continues to take an active interest the OMO and relevant representations are being examined.

Cold Weather Payments: North West

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people resident in each weather station area in the North West qualified for cold weather payments in each of the last five years. [28753]

Steve Webb: The available information is given in the table.

Estimated number of benefit units that received at least one cold weather payment for weather stations linked to postcode districts in the north-west

Weather station	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Bingley	128,600	0	0	162,300	117,800
Carlisle	0	0	0	15,000	10,000
Crosby	0	0	0	273,700	278,900
Eskdalemuir	7,200	7,600	6,400	6,500	6,500
Leek	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	9,200
Redesdale	n/a	n/a	6,200	6,300	6,400
Shap	n/a	n/a	4,900	4,900	5,000
Shawbury	61,400	64,600	0	65,200	66,300
St Bees Head	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	9,400
Stonyhurst	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	23,600
Walney Island	0	0	0	0	18,000
Woodford	0	0	0	210,300	212,000

n/a = not applicable: the weather station was not used in the cold weather payment scheme in that year.

Notes:

1. The information provided is Management Information. Our preference is to answer all parliamentary questions using Official/National Statistics but in this case we only have Management Information available. It is not quality assured to the same extent as Official/National Statistics and there are some issues with the data, for example, figures given are estimates. Actuals are not available.
2. A cold weather payment is made to an eligible customer when the average temperature has been recorded as, or is forecast to be, 0°C or below over seven consecutive days at the weather station linked to the customer's postcode. (When the temperature criterion is met, the weather station is said to trigger.)
3. Some weather stations listed are linked both to an area within the north-west and also to an area outside the north-west. Estimated numbers given are for the weather station as a whole, not for the part of the north-west linked to the weather station.
4. Some postcode to weather station linkages have changed from one year to the next, so estimated numbers are not always comparable from year to year.
5. Estimated numbers are for cold weather payments triggered in the relevant financial year.
6. Cold weather payments are made to benefit units. A benefit unit can be a single person or a couple and can include children.
7. Some benefit units received more than one payment in some years.
8. Estimated numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100.

Sources:

Postcode districts in the North West Government Office Region: analysis of National Statistics Postcode Directory.

Postcode district to weather station links: Department for Work and Pensions records.

Estimated numbers: scans of benefit computer systems taken at the end of October each year giving the number of potential qualifiers for cold weather payments by weather station.

Department for Work and Pensions records of triggers.

Department for Work and Pensions records of the total number of payments actually made by benefit computer system and clerically.

Council Tax

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department has undertaken an equality impact assessment of the proposed changes to council tax benefit; and if he will make a statement. [20879]

Steve Webb: We will publish an equality impact assessment for the proposed changes to council tax benefit announced in the spending review, in the normal way, accompanying the relevant legislation when introduced in Parliament.

Departmental Written Questions

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of questions tabled to the Secretary of State for written answer on a named day were answered substantively before or on the day named for answer *(a)* in Session 2009-10 and (b) since May 2010; how many such questions tabled between May 2010 and 12 November 2010 had not received a substantive answer by 18 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to his Department of answering a question for written answer on a named day on the day named for answer in the latest period for which figures are available. [25965]

Steve Webb: The Government have committed to providing the Procedure Committee with sessional statistics in a standard format on the time taken to respond to written parliamentary questions for the 2009-10 Session. This information will be submitted to the Procedure Committee shortly.

Some 334 named day questions were tabled to the Department between May 2010 and 12 November 2010, of which 321 (96.1%) were answered substantively on or before the day named for answer. All had received substantive answers by 18 November 2010.

No estimate has been made of the average cost to the Department for Work and Pensions of answering named day questions on the day named for answer. The Treasury conducts an annual indexation exercise of the cost of written and oral parliamentary questions so as to ensure that these average costs are increased in line with increases in underlying costs. The estimated costs that have applied from 20 January 2010 are:

Written question: £154

Oral question: £425.

The Treasury, in making its assessment of the cost of answering questions, does not differentiate between the types of written questions.

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of questions tabled to the Secretary of State for ordinary written answer *(a)* in Session 2009-10 and *(b)* since May 2010 were answered within (i) seven days and (ii) 14 days of tabling; how many such questions tabled between May 2010 and 12 November 2010 remained unanswered by 18 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to his Department of answering a question for ordinary written answer within seven days of tabling in the latest period for which figures are available. [25966]

Chris Grayling: The Government have committed to providing the Procedure Committee with sessional statistics *in a standard format on the time taken to respond to* written parliamentary questions for the 2009-10 Session. This information will be submitted to the Procedure Committee shortly.

Some 1,465 ordinary written questions were tabled to the Department between May 2010 and 12 November 2010, of which 641 (43.7%) were answered within five working days and 1,215 (82.9%) were answered within 10 working days. Some 98 Questions (6.7%) remained unanswered by 18 November 2010.

No estimate has been made of the average cost to the Department for Work and Pensions of answering named day questions on the day named for answer. The Treasury conducts an annual indexation exercise of the cost of written and oral parliamentary questions so as to ensure that these average costs are increased in line with increases in underlying costs. The estimated costs that have applied from 20 January 2010 are:

Written question: £154

Oral question: £425.

The Treasury, in making its assessment of the cost of answering questions, does not differentiate between the types of written questions.

Disability Living Allowance

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what equality impact assessment he has undertaken of the potential effects on disabled people living in residential care of the removal of the mobility component of disability living allowance. [28222]

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what equality impact assessment he has undertaken of the potential effects on disabled people living in residential care of the removal of the mobility component of disability living allowance. [28625]

Maria Miller: Consideration was given to the equality impacts of the measure when the proposal was being developed.

The equality impact assessment for removing the mobility component of disability living allowance from state funded care home residents after 28 days will be published with the proposed legislation.

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he has plans to review the limit on hours worked placed on recipients of disability living allowance and associated in-work tax credits. [28627]

Maria Miller: Disability living allowance is available to severely disabled people regardless of whether or not they are in work. We have launched a consultation on the reform of disability living allowance with a new benefit—personal independence payment to be introduced from 2013. Like disability living allowance this benefit will be available to severely disabled people regardless of their work status. A copy of the consultation document, "Disability Living Allowance reform" (Cm 7984), has been placed in the Library.

We have no plans to review the current limits on the number of hours people must be working in order to become entitled to the disability element of working tax credit. However, our White Paper, "Universal Credit: a new approach to welfare" (Cm 7957), published on 11 November announced a new universal credit. One of the key features of universal credit is that it will be paid in and out of work and that the hours rules will disappear to smooth the transition into work and ensure work pays. The aim is to introduce universal credit from 2013.

Disability Living Allowance: Scotland

Sheila Gilmore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in receipt of disability living allowance and aged between 25 and 35 years are resident in Edinburgh East constituency; and how many of these are also in receipt of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance. [29539]

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people between the ages of 25 and 35 years in receipt of disability living allowance there are resident in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency; and how many of these are also in receipt of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance. [30120]

Maria Miller: In May 2010 our records show that:

in Edinburgh East parliamentary constituency there were 490 recipients of disability living allowance aged between 25 and 35 years old;

in North Ayrshire and Arran parliamentary constituency there were 480 recipients of disability living allowance aged between 25 and 35 years old.

No information is available on housing benefit at the constituency level. At present geographic breakdowns are only available for local authorities and regions. However, an exercise is being undertaken to add other geographical areas to the data: this will include parliamentary constituencies.

Notes:

1. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest 10 recipients;
2. Figures do not include people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital;
3. Constituencies used are for the Westminster Parliament of May 2010.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

Disability Living Allowance: South Lanarkshire

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in receipt of disability living allowance and aged between 25 and 35 are resident in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency; and how many of these are also in receipt of (i) housing benefit and (ii) local housing allowance. [29371]

Maria Miller: The numbers of people in receipt of disability living allowance aged between 25 and 35 in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency are provided in the following table.

DLA claimants aged 25-35 (inclusive) in South Lanarkshire unitary authority and Rutherglen and Hamilton West parliamentary constituency—May 2010

	Aged 25-35 (inclusive)
South Lanarkshire unitary authority	1,520
Rutherglen and Hamilton West parliamentary constituency	630

Notes:
1. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest ten;
2. Figures do not include people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.
3. Constituencies used are for the Westminster Parliament of May 2010.
4. On 1 April 2009, the reorganisation of the local authorities of England created nine new unitary authorities (UA's) including South Lanarkshire.
5. Information is available on the number of housing benefit claimants in receipt of a passported benefit, such as income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, income-based employment support allowance and pension credit (guaranteed credit). Disability living allowance is not a housing benefit passported benefit, therefore the number of DLA claimants also receiving housing benefit is not available.
Source:
DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

The numbers of people in receipt of disability living allowance aged between 25 and 35 in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency who are also in receipt of housing benefit and local housing allowance are not available.

Disabled People: Employment

Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assistance his Department provides to young people with a disability who wish to move from education into work. [27317]

Maria Miller: The Department is committed to increasing the employment opportunities available to disabled people including young people and others who experience complex barriers to employment and in the process reducing the levels of unemployment and under-employment which they experience.

As of 25 October 2010 we launched Work Choice, a new pan-disability supported employment programme for disabled people, which provides tailored support and targets those customers who face the most complex barriers in reaching or retaining employment, including self-employment. Under a new funding model in which prime providers work closely with their subcontractors, individuals get consistent, quality support that helps them progress at work and, where it is appropriate for the individual, helps them move into unsupported employment.

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many disability employment programmes are supported by his Department. [30349]

Maria Miller: The Department for Work and Pensions is responsible for two major employment programmes delivered nationally across Great Britain, which are specifically aimed at helping disabled people find and stay in work.

They are:

Work Choice launched on 25 October, which provides tailored support to help disabled people who face the most complex barriers to employment find and stay in work and ultimately help them progress into unsupported employment, where it is appropriate for the individual.

Access to Work which provides practical advice and financial support to employed disabled people above and beyond what the employer could reasonably provide, to help them overcome obstacles resulting from disability and thus stay in work.

In addition, Remploy is an Executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions. It delivers a range of employment and development opportunities for disabled people, including under the Work Choice programme.

The Department for Work and Pensions also funds residential training for unemployed disabled adults whose needs cannot be met through any other government funded programmes.

From next year, the Work Programme will provide more personalised back-to-work support for unemployed people, including disabled people. We are working to ensure through Work Choice and the Work Programme, the widest possible range of help to return to work is available to disabled people and those who support and advise them.

On 2 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 89-90WS, I announced in a written ministerial statement an independent review of the support the Government provides to disabled people who want to work. This review will be conducted by Liz Sayce, chief executive of the disability organisation RADAR.

Housing Benefit

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much *(a)* homelessness prevention and *(b)* discretionary housing payments funding will be allocated to each local authority in each of the next three years. [28739]

Steve Webb: We are providing an additional £130 million to local authority discretionary housing payment budgets over the spending review period and we are discussing its allocation with the local authority associations. We are allocating a further £50 million over the spending review period to support the implementation of the 2011 housing benefit measures. We are still considering exactly how the money will be allocated.

The Department for Communities and Local Government has protected homelessness grant funding, with £400 million over the spending review period. Allocations to local authorities will be announced shortly, alongside the provisional local government finance settlement.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment his Department has made of the effects of his Department's proposed changes in the payment of housing benefit on levels of rent arrears in *(a)* Glasgow North East constituency, *(b)* Glasgow, *(c)* Scotland, *(d)* England, *(e)* Wales, *(f)* Northern Ireland and *(g)* the UK from 2012 onwards; [29595]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the effects of his Department's proposed *(a)* restriction of payments of local housing allowance to the 30th

percentile, *(b)* removal of housing benefit from recipients of jobseeker's allowance of 12 months' duration and *(c)* cap on the amount of housing benefit paid annually on levels of rent arrears; [29692]

(3) what assessment his Department has made of the effects on support services for the disabled of his Department's proposed changes to housing benefit; [29731]

(4) what assessment his Department has made of the effects on educational attainment by pupils in schools of his Department's proposed changes to housing benefit; [29732]

(5) what assessment his Department has made of the change in the levels of household overcrowding of his Department's proposed changes to housing benefit. [29734]

Steve Webb: We published an impact assessment on 30 November 2010 when we laid regulations which will give effect to the 2011 changes to local housing allowance rates. The assessment is available on the Department for Work and Pensions website:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/lha-impact-nov10.pdf

Impact assessments for the other measures announced in the June Budget and the comprehensive spending review will be published in the normal way alongside the relevant legislation.

Housing Benefit: Disability

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will consider bringing forward proposals to enable family members of disabled persons in receipt of housing benefit to claim the benefit on their behalf, in addition to spouses or partners. [30170]

Steve Webb: The housing benefit regulations already permit persons other than a spouse or partner to claim benefit on behalf of a customer if he is unable to act for himself. In these circumstances, family members or other persons can apply to the local authority to claim benefit on the customer's behalf. A local authority will then decide whether it is appropriate to appoint the applicant to act for the customer, having considered all the relevant circumstances of the case.

Housing Benefit: Glasgow

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance in Glasgow North constituency share their tenancy with a non-dependent in respect of whom a deduction is made from their entitlement. [30523]

Steve Webb: Information is not available on housing benefit recipients who share their tenancy with a non-dependant for which a deduction is made from their entitlement.

The Department does collect information on non-dependant deductions from the housing benefit/council tax benefit data source (SHBE) but to assess the completeness of recording and quality assure the figures to answer this PQ would incur disproportionate cost.

Pension Credit

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people receive pension credit. [30836]

Steve Webb: The information requested is in the following table.

As at May 2010	*Number*
Households in receipt of pension credit	2,734,170
Individual beneficiaries	3,349,760

Notes:

1. Case load figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Household recipients are those people who claim pension credit either for themselves or on behalf of themselves and a partner.
3. Individual beneficiaries are the number of claimants in addition to the number of partners for whom they are claiming.

Source:

DWP Information Direction Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100% data.

Private Rented Housing

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of vacant private rented homes with *(a)* one bedroom and *(b)* two bedrooms in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency where the rental is in the bottom 30% of local market values; [30506]

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of vacant private rented homes with *(a)* one bedroom and *(b)* two bedrooms in Glasgow North constituency where the rental is in the bottom 30% of local market values. [30516]

Steve Webb: This information is not available.

Rented Housing

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of tenants in each type of tenure under-occupying properties in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency; and how many such tenants are in receipt of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance; [30507]

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the number of multi-occupancy lets by tenure in Glasgow North constituency; [30518]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of tenants in each type of social housing tenure who are under-occupying properties in Glasgow North constituency; and how many such tenants are in receipt of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance. [30520]

Steve Webb: This information is not available.

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of vacant *(a)* housing association and *(b)* local authority tenanted homes in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency with (i) one bedroom and (ii) two bedrooms; [30508]

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of vacant *(a)* housing association and *(b)* local authority tenanted homes in Glasgow North constituency with (i) one bedroom and (ii) two bedrooms. [30519]

Steve Webb: This information is not available.

Social Fund

Damian Hinds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much money was paid out through the Social Fund in the form of *(a)* community care grants, *(b)* budgeting loans, *(c)* crisis loans, *(d)* Sure Start maternity grants, *(e)* funeral payments, *(f)* cold weather payments, *(g)* winter fuel payments and *(h)* grants or loans in each other Social Fund category in each of the last five years; and how many people received grants or loans of each such category in each year. [27586]

Steve Webb: The available information is in the following table.

Expenditure information is due to be re-stated and published on 21 December 2010 on the DWP website (the link to the website is):

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/index.php?page=expenditure

As such we cannot publish information on expenditure in response to this question.

Estimate of the number of people who received grants or loans over the last five years in Great Britain

	Community care grants	*Budgeting loans*	*Crisis loans*	*Cold weather payments*	*Winter fuel payments*
2005-06	273,000	926,000	576,000	611,000	11,555,000
2006-07	271,000	1,008,000	579,000	334,000	11,750,000
2007-08	253,000	920,000	693,000	459,000	12,123,000
2008-09	264,000	871,000	884,000	3,979,000	12,421,000
2009-10	274,000	946,000	1,117,000	4,245,000	12,681,000

Notes:

1. The information provided is management information. Our preference is to answer all parliamentary questions using Official/National Statistics but in this case we only have management information available. It is not quality assured to the same extent as Official/National Statistics and there are some issues with the data.
2. For technical reasons figures are estimated volumes rather than actual volumes, except for winter fuel payments which are actual volumes.
3. For winter fuel payments, the number of recipients is the number of individuals to whom payment was made. Where an eligible person is receiving pension credit, income-based jobseeker's allowance or income related employment and support allowance on behalf of a couple, that person receives one winter fuel payment on behalf of the couple.
4. Figures for winter fuel payments include payments made to recipients within Great Britain and also recipients from within the European economic area who qualified for payments while resident in Great Britain.
5. Figures for winter fuel payments for 2005-06 have been revised and therefore do not match exactly those currently in the House of Commons Library. Information in the Library will be updated as soon as possible.
6. The numbers of people in receipt of a grant or loan have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
7. The numbers of recipients for sure start maternity grants and funeral payments are unavailable.

Source:

Analysis of scans of the Social Fund Computer System taken at the end of September after the relevant financial year. DWP records for cold weather payments and published DWP caseload tables for winter fuel payments

Social Security Benefits: Addiction

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many benefit recipients are recorded as having a drug addiction; and what proportion of these have a dual diagnosis; [29511]

(2) how many benefit recipients are recorded as being alcoholic; [29512]

(3) how many heroin addicts were in receipt of benefits in each of the last three years. [29650]

Maria Miller: The information available is presented in the following tables. Data on the number of benefit claimants with a drug addiction recorded as having a dual diagnosis (i.e. the standard accepted definition of both a drug addiction and a serious mental health problem) are not routinely collected.

As outlined in the Government's recently published drug strategy, substance dependency is one of the most damaging root causes of poverty, and helping people who are trapped on benefits through drug and alcohol addiction to recover and find employment is a top priority for this Government.

Table 1: Incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance and employment and support allowance claimants in Great Britain with drug or alcohol abuse recorded as the main disabling condition—May 2010

	Number of claimants
Total number with drug abuse	48,170
Total number with alcohol abuse	56,580

Notes:

1. Data are rounded to the nearest 10 claimants.
2. These figures refer to claimants whose problems relate to any drugs (including prescription ones). Claimants who do not report drug or alcohol dependency as their main disabling condition are not captured, nor are people on JSA or IS for whom this information is not recorded, meaning that these figures represent a subset of all claimants with a drug or alcohol problem.
3. Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance was replaced by employment and support allowance (ESA) for new claimants in October 2008.
4. Drug or alcohol dependency does not of itself confer entitlement to disability benefits, this is determined by a person's capability or capacity for employment. Where individuals with a substance dependency are in receipt of such benefits it will be because they have other diagnoses, for example mental illness, which limit their capability for work.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate 100% Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS).

Table 2: Estimated number of working-age claimants who are problem drug users (heroin or crack cocaine) by benefit type in England in 2006

	Number of claimants
Total in receipt of one or more working-age benefits	267,000

Notes:

1. The figures are derived from estimates of the number of problem drug users on each of jobseekers allowance, incapacity benefit, income support and disability living allowance. They do not record if problem drug use is the reason for the benefit claim.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

3. The copy of the working paper by Hay and Bauld can be found in the House of Commons Library, and can also be accessed at: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/WP46.pdf

Source:

Population estimates of problematic drug users in England who access Department for Work and Pensions benefits: A feasibility study, Working Paper No. 46, Hay, G. and Bauld, L. 2008

Social Security Benefits: Livingston

Graeme Morrice: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of applications for employment and support allowance made by residents in Livingston constituency in *(a)* 2009 and *(b)* 2010 were rejected on the basis of the work capability assessment; and in respect of what proportion of such applications that decision was (i) reversed and (ii) upheld on appeal. [27613]

Maria Miller: Data are available at local authority level so figures for West Lothian have been provided. It should be noted that, because the number of appeals heard for claims which began after August 2009 are too low for inclusion at the time of response, we can only provide figures for claims started between October 2008 and August 2009.

Employment and support allowance claims to August 2009 assessed, found fit for work and appealed—West Lothian

Month ESA claim started	*Completed assessments*	*Fit for work*	*Percentage fit for work*	*Appeals heard (to date)*	*Percentage fit for work with an appeal heard (to date)*	*Decision in favour of appellant*	*DWP decision upheld*	*Percentage decision in favour of appellant*	*Percentage DWP decision upheld*
October 2008	20	10	73	0	73	0	0	75	25
November 2008	110	90	79	40	79	10	30	31	69
December 2008	90	70	80	30	80	10	20	38	63
January 2009	100	90	83	40	83	20	20	47	53
February 2009	110	90	83	40	83	30	20	61	39
March 2009	130	110	85	60	85	30	30	50	50
April 2009	110	80	71	40	71	20	20	55	45
May 2009	110	90	82	40	82	20	20	54	46
June 2009	110	70	68	30	68	10	20	45	55
July 2009	130	90	70	30	70	10	20	34	66
August 2009	100	70	72	20	72	10	10	41	59
Total	1,110	860	77	380	77	180	200	47	53

The table presents data on employment and support allowance claims up to the end of August 2009 where the person claiming has completed assessment, been found Fit for Work, subsequently appealed the Department's decision and had the appeal heard by the Tribunals Service by the end of July 2010. July 2010 is the latest data we have from the Tribunals Service.

Due to the time it takes for appeals to be submitted and heard by the Tribunals Service, it is likely that there are more appeals that have not yet been heard, particularly for the most recent cohorts of ESA claims. The percentage of people found Fit for Work who appeal (column 6) therefore appears to decrease as the date of claim becomes more recent, but this may not in fact reflect a decline in appeals against a Fit for Work decision as a number of appeals may have been submitted but not yet heard. These figures should therefore be treated as emerging findings and not as final at this stage.

The table is consistent with table 5 of the latest work capability assessment publication with the inclusion of completed assessments and the percentage found Fit For Work. The publication can be found here:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/workingage/esa_wca/index.php?page=esa_wca_arc

Social Security Benefits: Mental Health

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many benefit recipients have received treatment for mental health problems in the last 12 months. [29513]

Maria Miller: We do not collect information on whether benefit recipients are receiving treatment for mental health conditions. Information about the numbers of people claiming benefits due to health reasons is available on the Department of Work and Pensions website's tabulation tool.

State Retirement Pensions

Rachel Reeves: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the effect on the level of income of *(a)* men and *(b)* women born between 6 April 1953 and 5 April 1960 of the acceleration in the timescale for increasing the state pension age. [29292]

Steve Webb: Revised life expectancy projections mean that by 2026 men aged 66 are expected to live an extra 1.5 years and women an extra 1.6 years, on average, on top of the 2004 projections used to set the current state pension age increases. No responsible Government can ignore these increases in life expectancy and the pressure they place on the state pension system. Our new timetable will reduce pressures on public finances by around £30 billion between 2016-17 and 2025-26.

The effect on the level of income is complex and will vary significantly between individuals. We estimate that those people affected by the changes to state pension age will lose state pensions of, on average, *(a)* men approximately £7,600 and *(b)* women nearly £7,250 (in 2010-11 prices).

About 40% of those affected are expected to remain in employment when they reach age 65; earning and saving longer for retirement.

However the Government will support those who will not be able to continue working by providing working age benefits.

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress his Department has made on the introduction of a flat-rate basic state pension. [30353]

Steve Webb: The Government are currently examining all aspects of the state pension system to identify options that could lead to a more simple and straightforward system but final decisions have not yet been made.

David Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what account he has taken of the rights of individuals to defer receipt of a state pension beyond the state retirement age in formulating his proposals for a flat-rate state pension. [30615]

Steve Webb: The Government are currently examining all aspects of the state pension system to identify options that could lead to a more simple and straightforward system but final decisions have not yet been made.

Tenants: Lanarkshire

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the number of tenants in each type of tenancy tenure who are under-occupying their property in *(a)* South Lanarkshire and *(b)* Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency; and how many of these are in receipt of (i) housing benefit and (ii) local housing allowance. [29528]

Steve Webb: The information is not available at a parliamentary constituency level. Data on the actual size of property occupied by social sector tenants are not yet collected as part of DWP administration and the data collected for private sector tenants are not of sufficient quality to undertake detailed analysis of the accommodation they occupy. This is because this information is not required for the housing benefit calculation. Existing survey data do not permit large enough sample sizes for detailed analysis.

Universal Credit

Harriett Baldwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what role local authorities will play in administering the proposed universal credit; and if he will make a statement. [29653]

Chris Grayling: The administration of universal credit will be organised by the Department for Work and Pensions. We are working closely with local authorities on the implications for them of the introduction of universal credit.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 16 December 2010

WALES

Departmental Manpower

Owen Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what changes have been made to the roles and responsibilities of senior staff in her Department since 7 May 2010. [30910]

Mr David Jones: There has been no substantial change to the responsibilities of senior staff since 7 May 2010.

Departmental Overseas Visits

Owen Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much her Department has spent on overseas visits by Ministers and officials since 7 May 2010. [30912]

Mr David Jones: Nil.

Departmental Secondment

Owen Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many staff her Department has appointed on secondment since 7 May 2010; and from what organisation each such member of staff has been seconded. [30909]

Mr David Jones: No member of staff has been appointed on secondment. Two members of staff from the Welsh Assembly Government have been working in the Department since 7 May 2010.

Departmental Temporary Employment

Owen Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many officials her Department has appointed on fixed-term contracts since 7 May 2010. [30911]

Mr David Jones: No staff have been appointed on fixed-term contracts since 7 May 2010.

Departmental Training

Owen Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much her Department has spent on employee training and staff development since 7 May 2010. [30913]

Mr David Jones: My Department has spent £6,256.31 on training and staff development since 7 May 2010. The amounts spent include a professional accreditation and £1,926.31 is for advanced payments for courses in the new year.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Banks

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what account he has taken of *(a)* banking market conditions in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the effects on that market of the current financial situation in the Republic of Ireland in developing his proposals for an enterprise zone in Northern Ireland. [30727]

Mr Paterson: The forthcoming HM Treasury consultation paper on rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy, to be published by the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, my hon. Friend the Member for South West Hertfordshire (Mr Gauke), will examine a wide range of proposals for possible economic reform options to rebalance the NI economy and attract significant new investment. I am aware of the particular circumstances for lending to SMEs in Northern Ireland, though there is some evidence that lending is being affected by low take-up rather than credit rationing by banks.

The Treasury will work closely with the Northern Ireland Executive over the implications for the Northern Ireland banking system of recent events both in the Republic of Ireland and elsewhere.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31217]

Mr Paterson: There are no staff employed in the London office of the Department whose gross hourly pay on a full-time equivalent basis, including London Weighting, is below the London living wage.

SCOTLAND

Higher Education

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent discussions he has had with the *(a)* Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills and *(b)* Minister of State for Higher and Further Education on the impact on Scottish higher educational institutions of the planned increase in university tuition fees in England. [31332]

David Mundell: The Secretary of State for Scotland and I are in regular contact with ministerial colleagues in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills on a range of matters important to Scotland, including student finance.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Scottish Executive and *(b)* Universities Scotland on the impact on Scottish higher educational institutions of the planned increase in levels of university tuition fees in England; and if he will make a statement. [31338]

David Mundell: The Secretary of State for Scotland and I are in regular contact with a range of stakeholders, including Universities Scotland, on matters concerning higher education in Scotland.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Construction: Finance

Mr Spellar: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what additional cost in respect of building work on the House of Commons estate was incurred as a result of the House sitting in September 2010. [31057]

John Thurso: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Harwich and North Essex (Mr Jenkin) on 13 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 290W.

Drinking Water

Robert Halfon: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, how much the House of Commons Service has spent on bottled water in the last 24 months; what the average cost to the House per litre of water supplied was; which company holds the contract to supply bottled water to the House; and under what procedures *(a)* the tender for this contract was issued and *(b)* the contract was let. [30328]

John Thurso: The House has spent £95,023 on bottled water (other than bottled water obtained for water coolers) over the last two years for which full figures are available (2008-09 and 2009-10). The average cost for bottled water over the period was 38p per litre. The contract for supplying bottled water is held by Hildon Natural Mineral Water. Contract award followed the EU restricted procedure. The contract was extended in 2010 with the intention of competitively re-tendering in 2011.

Where the House pays for water coolers together with bottled water, the cost of the bottled water cannot be separately identified. The House has spent £9,825 on water coolers, including bottled water and supplies, over the last two years for which full figures are available (2008-09 and 2009-10). The cost for an 18 litre bottle for water coolers was 20p per litre. The House uses suppliers from a public sector framework contract. The supplier most frequently used is Pressure Coolers Ltd.

Official Hospitality

John Mann: To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, if the House of Commons Commission will take steps to assess the level of compliance with the regulations on the use of House dining facilities in respect of indirect fundraising for political parties in the last 12 months. [30402]

John Thurso: The House's Catering and Retail Services seek to ensure that the regulations on use of the dining rooms are complied with, principally, as regards fundraising for political parties, by requiring hon. Members to certify that they have read the regulations and will abide by them. The main responsibility lies with hon. Members. It is not clear what evidence the Commission could gather to make a general assessment of the level of compliance with the regulations. It is open to anyone who has evidence of a breach of the regulations to make a complaint to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Attorney-General how many invoices the Law Officers' Departments processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30759]

The Attorney-General: The information requested is contained in the following table:

Department	*Numbers of invoices processed between 1 December 2009 and 30 November 2010*
TSol[1]	49,506
CPS	350,394
SFO	8,699
NFA	895

[1] TSol also processes invoices for AGO and HMCPSI

Ejup Ganic

Mr Whittingdale: To ask the Attorney-General what fees have been paid to prosecution counsel instructed by the Crown Prosecution Service on the case of Ejup Ganic between 26 March 2010 and 20 August 2010. [30679]

The Solicitor-General: The total fees paid to the five counsel instructed by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for the conduct of the extradition proceedings against Dr Ejup Ganic between 26 March 2010 and 20 August 2010 amounted to £69,000.

INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENTARY STANDARDS AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Communication

Bob Russell: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, by what means the post of Director of Communications at the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority was advertised; who was responsible for drawing up the shortlist of candidates for that role; how many people were included on the shortlist of candidates; who sat on the interview panel; and on what date the appointment took effect. [29685]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking how the post of Director of Communications was advertised; who was responsible for drawing up the shortlist of candidates for the role; how many people were included on that shortlist; who sat on the interview panel and on what date the appointment took effect. (29685)

The post of the Director of Communisations was initially advertised in February 2010, but a candidate was not found. In May 2010, the role was re-advertised online on a number of websites, including PR Week, Guardian Jobs, Exec-Appointments.com, Green Park, Executivesontheweb.com, and diverse-leaders.com.

Candidates were shortlisted for interview by IPSA from a long-list of applicants. There were four candidates on the shortlist.

Final interviews were conducted by IPSA's chief executive, IPSA's chairman, and an independent panel member.

The successful candidate's appointment took effect on 20 September 2010.

Bob Russell: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* application form and *(b)* supporting documentation for the person appointed as Director of Communications for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. [29686]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking if I will place in the Library a copy of the (a) application form and (b) supporting documentation for the person appointed as Director of Communications for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. 29686

Applicants were requested to send their CV and a supporting statement based on the job specification and person specification. This information constitutes personal data and I will not therefore be releasing it. Copies of the job description and person specification are, however, available on the IPSA website.

Loans: Members

John Mann: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, how many hon. Members have been refused advance loans by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority to date. [29496]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question as to how many honourable Members have been refused advances and loans by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority in 2010 to date (29496).

We offered Members the facility to apply for an interest-free advance of up to £4,000 each. The advance is to assist Members to cover any expenses they incur that are allowable under the scheme. As of 8 December, 253 Members had applied for and had received such an advance. No applications for advances of up to £4,000 have been refused. One application for a greater sum was refused. This application was subsequently resubmitted for a permissible amount and approved.

We have also provided loans for deposits on rented office and living accommodation. As of 8 December, 172 loans have been made to 157 Members. No applications for such loans have been refused. In one instance a Member submitted and subsequently withdrew an application as the deposit was no longer required.

Members: Allowances

Mr Spellar: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, on which dates the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) received a request for information under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 from *The Times* newspaper on hon. Members' expenses; and on what dates IPSA responded. [31056]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking on which dates the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) received a request for information under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 from The Times newspaper on Members' expenses; and on what dates the IPSA responded.

IPSA received a Freedom of Information request from The Times newspaper on 22 September. We responded on 19 October advising the requestor that we would require more time to consider the use of a qualified exemption. On 19 November we provided a substantive answer. On 22 November we received a further request pursuant to our response. This resulted in the release of additional information on 30 November and further information on 14 December.

Members: Bank Services

John Mann: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, to how many business bank accounts operated by the offices of hon. Members the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority made payments in the latest period for which figures are available. [30407]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking to how many business bank accounts operated by the offices of hon. Members the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority made payments in the latest period for which figures are available.

IPSA can register a number of bank accounts for each MP; the purposes of each are determined by MPs themselves.

By the end of November, IPSA had made payments relating to MPs' salaries and expenses into a total of 1,483 bank accounts. This number includes not only MPs' bank accounts, but accounts held by certain members of MPs' staff and MPs' landlords.

Of these 1,483 bank accounts, some 295 are, for IPSA's purposes, operated by MPs exclusively for the payment of expenses. A further 645 of the 1,483 bank accounts are used to pay MPs' salaries, and we estimate that some 348 of these 645 are also used for the payment of expenses and other non-personal transactions.

Visits

John Mann: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, how many site visits were carried out by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority in October and November 2010. [29495]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking how many site visits were carried out by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority in October and November 2010.

During October 2010, IPSA officials carried out five visits to Westminster offices to discuss policy matters, and 50 visits for assistance with the online expenses system. In November 2010, IPSA officials made five visits to MPs in their constituencies, 10 visits to Westminster offices to discuss policy, and 53 visits for assistance with the online expenses system. In addition, IPSA Board members paid MPs two visits during this period.

EDUCATION

Day Care: Disabled

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to increase the availability of affordable and accessible childcare for disabled children. [23468]

Sarah Teather: All local authorities received funding in 2010-11 under the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare (DCATCH) programme. This funding has been used to embed changes to practice locally which will improve the service offered to disabled children. Local authorities are focusing their funding on a number of areas including: work force development, improving information for families and increasing capacity, inclusion and improving quality. Arrangements about funding for future years will be announced in due course.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Liz Kendall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many people resident in *(a)* England, *(b)* Leicester and *(c)* Leicester West constituency were in receipt of education maintenance allowance on the latest date for which figures are available [27698]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 30 November 2010]*: This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who operate the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, will write to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Libraries.

Free Schools

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many Free Schools he expects to open in September 2011. [20739]

Mr Gibb: Twenty two Free School proposals that intend to open in 2011 are currently in the business case and plan stage. I am confident that they will submit strong business cases which will enable as many Free Schools as possible to open in September 2011.

School Linking Network Programme

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much funding his Department has allocated to the School Linking Network programme since October 2007; and how many projects in each local authority area have received assistance from that programme. [26382]

Mr Gibb: The Department has allocated £2 million to the School Linking Network (SLN) since October 2007.

The SLN has supported 857 projects involving over 1,700 schools. Of these 857 projects, 379 have been funded by the £2 million from the DfE, with the remainder being self-funded. The breakdown by local authority is set out in the following table:

Local authority	*Number of DfE funded projects*
Barking and Dagenham	8
Birmingham	10
Bolton	10
Bradford	10
Bristol	8
Bucks	10
Bury	10
Cheshire	10
Cornwall	8
Coventry	10
Cumbria	10
Derby City	10
Derbyshire	10
Gateshead	10
Gloucestershire	10
Hull	10
Kent	10
Kirklees	10
Lancashire	10
LCA	10
Leeds	10
Leicester City	9
Luton	10
Manchester	10
Milton Keynes	10
Newham	10
Norfolk	7
North London International Schools Network (five boroughs)	10
Northamptonshire	10
Nottingham City	10
Nottinghamshire	10
Plymouth	9
Rotherham	10
Somerset	13
Stockport	9
Sunderland	10
Tower Hamlets	8
Wakefield	10
Wigan	10
Total	379

The funding also supports the 975 schools registered with SLN to help them to find links. Bespoke training days have been held across the country to help these schools to develop linking projects.

School Sport Partnerships

Richard Harrington: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans his Department has for the future of the schools sport partnership. [16831]

Tim Loughton: The coalition Government's approach differs from that of the last Government. While the network helped schools to increase participation rates in the areas targeted by the previous Government, the fact remains that the proportion of pupils playing competitive sport regularly has remained disappointingly low.

The Secretary of State has decided to withdraw central funding for the Youth Sport Trust because, in spite of significant central Government expenditure, nearly a quarter of all pupils do not do any competitive sport at all within their own school; and more than half of all pupils do not do any competitive sport at all against other schools.

Furthermore, the actual provision of competitive sport across the country has been very patchy, with some 1,280 secondary schools having none of their pupils taking part in any intra-school sporting competition, and 710 schools where no pupils regularly take part in any inter-school competition.

Consequently, the Secretary of State concluded that a fresh approach to school sport is needed and has announced that he will not continue to provide ring-fenced funding for school sport partnerships. By removing all the unnecessary targets and reporting requirements placed on schools by the previous Government's strategy, schools will be freed up to provide more opportunities for competitive sport that are most appropriate for their own pupils. The best way to increase participation is to give schools the freedom and incentives to organise school sport themselves, rather than imposing a central Government blueprint.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the effects of the removal of funding for schools sports partnerships *(a)* nationally and *(b)* in Brighton Pavilion constituency on the provision of (i) after-school sports clubs, (ii) inter-schools competitions and (iii) dance and sports festivals. [26599]

Tim Loughton: The coalition Government's approach to school sport differs fundamentally from that of the previous Government. While the network of school sport partnerships helped schools to increase participation rates in areas targeted by the previous Government, the fact remains that the proportion of pupils playing competitive sport regularly has remained disappointingly low. Only around two in every five pupils play competitive sport regularly within their own school, and only one in five plays regularly against other schools.

We are committed to creating an Olympic and Paralympic style school sport competition to address this. The best way to create a lasting Olympic legacy in schools is to give them the freedom and incentives to organise it themselves, for themselves, rather than imposing a central Government blueprint.

When announcing his decision not to continue to ring-fence funding for school sport partnerships, the Secretary of State also lifted the many requirements of the previous Government's PE and sport strategy. This gives schools the freedom and clarity to concentrate on competitive sport. In giving schools this freedom, we are trusting school leaders to take decisions in the best interests of the pupils and parents they serve. This will allow schools, both nationally and in the Brighton Pavilion constituency, more time and greater freedoms to run after school clubs and to organise competitions and festivals involving other schools.

I should clarify that the Department is not closing down school sport partnerships. Rather, they are being entrusted to schools, who can decide whether and how to use them in the future.

Special Educational Needs: Academies

Pat Glass: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has for the future funding of academies in respect of education services for children with low incidence special educational needs. [22596]

Sarah Teather: The Secretary of State is aware of this issue and will be making an announcement shortly about the future funding of academies.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Detention Centres: Children

Tessa Munt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many families have been separated when one parent is held in immigration detention while their children stay in the community for the purposes of immigration control in the latest period for which figures are available; and how many such families were single parent families. [30823]

Damian Green: The UK Border Agency will always first seek to achieve voluntary departure of illegal migrant families. Where families refuse to leave the UK, enforcement efforts will start with efforts to remove the family without the need to detain any family members. Separating parents from children is only ever done as a matter of last resort and only after careful case by case consideration.

For example, there may be circumstances where a prisoner, who is also a parent, is released from prison and a decision is made to maintain their detention under immigration powers in order to effect their deportation. Such assessments are made on a case by case basis taking into account public and child protection concerns.

However, family separations may occur for other reasons, such as for child protection purposes (which would be a matter for local authority children's services) or where the parent has chosen to separate the family by deliberately hiding the whereabouts of their children. Where children are missing the UK Border Agency will work with other statutory agencies, such as the police and local authorities, to try and locate the children and reunite them with their parent.

At present we do not centrally hold the requested information. To do so would mean examining individual case records at a disproportionate cost. In response to the Independent Chief Inspector's report into family removals the UK Border Agency committed to improving the management information held on families, which we are currently reviewing.

Human Trafficking: Children

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet representatives of Barnardo's prior to her announcement of a strategy for human trafficking of the purpose of learning from their experience of child trafficking in the UK. [31305]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Police: Manpower

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* police officers, *(b)* police community support officers and *(c)* other staff in each police force area were assigned to each police function in the latest period for which figures are available. [26079]

Mrs May *[holding answer 23 November 2010]:* The available data are provided in the tables placed in the House Library. The tables show the police officer, police community support officer, and police staff functions in England and Wales as at 31 March 2010. The available data are collected by the Home Office from police forces as part of the annual data requirement, ADR601.

Sergei Magnitsky

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will *(a)* exclude from the UK and *(b)* freeze the assets of any Russian officials found to be involved in (i) the arrest, treatment in prison and death of Sergei Magnitsky and (ii) the fraudulent activity against the Russian Federation he alleged before his arrest. [31109]

Damian Green: As the Prime Minister outlined in a previous response to this issue the Government remain very concerned by Mr Magnitsky's case. We are awaiting the conclusion of the official investigation into this case announced by President Medvedev in November 2009. It would therefore not be appropriate for me to comment any further at this time on the individual circumstances of the case.

UK Border Agency: Training

Tessa Munt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training on the restraint of children UK Border Agency enforcement staff receive. [30824]

Damian Green: The use of control and restraint against children is used as last resort and only by specially trained officers. Arrest trained officers can only use the minimum amount of force necessary to carry out their duties, and the control and restraint of children must be limited to circumstances where it is necessary for an officer to use physical intervention to prevent harm to the child or any individual present.

UK Border Agency arrest team immigration officers are trained in the use of control and restraint by accredited police trainers to standards that are laid down by the police. This training is reviewed regularly and all arrest-trained officers are required to attend refresher training every 12 months, which they must pass in order to retain their accreditation.

The use of control and restraint is carefully monitored and scrutinised internally to ensure that it is justified. Our operational activities are also subject to inspection by John Vine, the Independent Chief Inspector.

Further information on UK Border Agency procedures in family cases, including the use of force against children, can be found in chapter 45 of the Enforcement Instructions and Guidance manual which is available to view at:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/enforcement/oemsectione/

As part of the review 'ending child detention for immigration purposes' the UK Border Agency is engaging closely with child welfare organisations to review training provided to staff who manage families.

Welsh Refugee Council: Finance

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what funding she plans to provide for the Welsh Refugee Council in *(a)* 2010-11 and *(b)* 2011-12; [31040]

(2) what funding her Department provided for the Welsh Refugee Council in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [31041]

Damian Green: Funding has been made available to the Welsh Refugee Council for the provision of support for asylum seekers in the form of 'One Stop Service' and initial accommodation wrap-around services. The following table details the funds made available for these services for the past three years and the maximum funding level for these services for 2011-12.

Financial year	*Funding levels (£)*
2008-09	1,271,948
2009-10	1,291,425
2010-11	1,233,883
2011-12	515,248

The maximum funding level for 2011-12 does not include funding for the provision of the Refugee Integration Employment Services in Wales or for strategic funding that will be made available to the Welsh Refugee Council.

TRANSPORT

Cycling: Greater London

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will issue guidance to local authorities on taking up the cycle hire scheme in operation in central London. [30819]

Norman Baker: I welcome the positive impact that the cycle hire scheme has had on journey patterns in central London and the environmental benefits that have accrued. However, I do not intend to issue guidance to local authorities. It is a matter for local authorities to decide whether to introduce a cycle hire scheme in their local area taking into account issues such as their current levels of cycling, cycling infrastructure, current patterns of public transport use and other factors.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30758]

Norman Baker: During the last 12 months (December 2009-November 2010) the Department for Transport and its agencies processed 227,462 invoices. This information, together with further details, is available on the DFT website at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/procurement/dft/promptpaymentstats

The details are set out beneath the 30 working days chart.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30024]

Norman Baker: The Department for Transport does not have a specific budget for conferences.

Departmental Consultants

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* nature was of the management consultancy for which his Department paid the Central Office of Information (a) £113,724.72 on 10 June 2010, (b) £299,574.96 on 14 June 2010 and (c) £127,416.44 on 17 June 2010. [27225]

Norman Baker: The purpose of the expenditure in all three cases was publicity to raise public awareness and encourage behaviours to improve road safety and reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on roads in Great Britain.

The expenditure is identified as "Publicity" in the monthly spend spreadsheet available on the Department's website.

Departmental Manpower

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many agency staff his Department and its non-departmental public bodies employ at each pay grade. [27791]

Norman Baker: The number of agency staff currently employed in each pay grade is:

			Non-departmental public bodies				
Grade equivalent	*Pay band*	*DFT inc. agencies*	*Renewable Fuels Agency*	*Northern Lighthouse Board*	*Trinity Lighthouse Service*	*High Speed Two Ltd*	*Traffic Commissioners and Deputies*
AA	PB1	36	0	0	0	<5	0
AO	PB2	44	0	<5	<5	5	7
EO	PB3	6	<5	0	0	<5	0
HEO	PB4	8	<5	<5	0	0	0
SEO	PB5	<5	0	0	0	<5	0
G7	PB6	13	0	0	0	<5	0
G6	PB7	5	0	0	0	<5	0
SCS	SCS	0	0	0	0	0	0

Non-departmental public bodies who do not currently employ agency staff are:

British Transport Police Authority

Cycling England

Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee

Directly Operated Railways Ltd.

Passenger Focus

Railway Heritage Committee.

Departmental NDPBs

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate his Department has made of the expenditure on redundancy costs likely to be incurred by each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies in *(a)* 2010-11, *(b)* 2011-12, *(c)* 2012-13 and *(d)* the spending review period. [30906]

Norman Baker: Redundancy costs at each of the Department for Transport's non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) will be dependent on the precise nature, extent and timing of future changes. We have set out our proposed reforms to a number of DfT NDPBs and other public bodies, including those named in Schedules 1 to 5 of the Public Bodies Bill, but are not yet in a position to provide robust information on the likely redundancy costs. We would expect to make this information available in due course.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28847]

Norman Baker: The amount the Department for Transport spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10 is shown in the following table:

		£
Organisation	*(a) 2008-09*	*(b) 2009-10*
DFT(c)	165,583	159,631
DSA	2,132,383	1,910,822
DVLA	239,483	113,853
GCDA	0.00	0.00
HA	803,141	764,607
MCA	326,281	299,196
VOSA	2,023,000	1,687,000
VCA	4,137	5,574

Key:

DFT(c)	Department for Transport (Centre)
DSA	Driving Standards Agency
DVLA	Driver, Vehicle and Licensing Agency
GCDA	Government Car and Despatch Agency
HA	Highways Agency
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
VCA	Vehicle Certification Agency
VOSA	Vehicle and Operator Services Agency

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Swansea

Geraint Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what impact assessment his Department has conducted of the effects on the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) in Swansea of the comprehensive spending review outcomes; what assessment he has made of the effects of the outcomes of the Review on the number of people employed by the Agency in Swansea; what restructuring of DVLA he expects to take place as a consequence of implementation of the review outcomes; and if he will make a statement. [19582]

Mike Penning: The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), like all areas of the Department for Transport, will need to make savings as part of the comprehensive spending review. The DVLA has a good record of delivering efficiency savings and already has plans in place to continue this work. However, it is too early to say what impact these savings will have on the structure of the DVLA or the number of people whom it employs.

Electric Vehicles: Retail Trade

Stephen Phillips: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with distribution network operators on the provision of electricity to retail outlets providing charging points for electric cars. [30977]

Norman Baker: Officials from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles have met with distribution network operators (DNOs) as part of the Plugged-In Places scheme and will continue to do so as the Government develop their strategy for the installation of electric vehicle infrastructure. The Plugged-In Places scheme offers match-funding to support the cost of installing a critical mass of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in lead places across the UK: at home, at work, in public areas (such as car parks or on street) and at retail sites.

Fuels: Official Cars

George Eustice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent on each type of fuel used by ministerial cars in each year since 2005. [31059]

Mike Penning: The information about expenditure on different types of fuel used by ministerial cars since 2005 is not available. The Government Car and Despatch Agency only holds data for the entire government fleet that it operates.

Marine Salvage Tugs: Public Expenditure

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department conducted any environmental risk assessment prior to the decision announced as part of the comprehensive spending review to end funding for marine salvage tugs. [29770]

Mike Penning *[holding answer 9 December 2010]*: The decision to withdraw public funding for the provision of emergency towing vessels (ETVs) was informed by a series of marine assessments, arising from a number of work streams which address a range of wider marine environmental issues.

Official Cars: Carbon Emissions

George Eustice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the mileage of ministerial cars was in each year since 2005; and what estimate he has made of the carbon footprint of journeys made by ministerial cars in each such year. [31060]

Mike Penning: The information requested on the mileage and carbon footprint of journeys made by ministerial cars since 2005 is not available. The Government Car and Despatch Agency only holds data about the entire car fleet that it operates.

Public Transport

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate his Department has made of the number of persons who habitually travelled to a place of work in *(a)* England, *(b)* the East Midlands and *(c)* Leicestershire by (i) train, (ii) car and (iii) bus in each of the last five years. [31081]

Norman Baker: The requested statistics for England and the East Midlands are shown in the table. These are estimates taken from the Labour Force Survey, which includes questions on mode of travel to work during a three-month period (October to December) in each year.

Figures for Leicestershire are not available as the survey sample size is not large enough to provide reliable estimates for this area.

					Thousand
	October to December				
Area/Mode of travel	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
England					
Train[1]	678	970	1,072	1,084	1,040
Car[2]	10,433	14,605	14,518	14,281	13,998
Bus/coach[3]	1,104	1,562	1,526	1,477	1,331
East Midlands					
Train[1]	[4]	11	12	13	13

Thousand

Area/Mode of travel	*October to December* 2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Car[2]	929	1,317	1,321	1,341	1,279
Bus/coach[3]	60	99	120	97	97

[1] Includes railway trains but excludes underground train and light railway or tram.

[2] Includes car, van, minibus and works van.

[3] Includes bus, coach and private bus.

[4] Data are not shown due to the estimate falling below the LFS minimum threshold of 10 thousand.

Source: ONS

Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Public Transport: Fares

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on the recognition as a user group of reduced fare users in consultations on the future of public transport services. [30930]

Norman Baker: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I provided to her on 9 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 404-05W.

Roads: Snow and Ice

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Highways Agency plans to import salt from overseas to meet winter demands for road salt; and if he will make a statement. [28528]

Mike Penning *[holding answer 3 December 2010]:* As a result of the Independent Winter Resilience review led by David Quarmby, which delivered its final report in October 2010, the Highways Agency is importing a national reserve of 250,000 tonnes of salt. In addition, following its own internal review, the Highways Agency is importing a reserve of a further 60,000 tonnes of salt, over and above its planned operational requirements for its own purposes.

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with local authorities on winter resilience preparations; and if he will make a statement. [28748]

Norman Baker: Ministers and officials from the Department for Transport discuss a wide range of transport issues with local authorities, including winter resilience preparations.

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Hammond) and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Mr Pickles) wrote on 12 November to the leaders of all English local authorities. This letter advised on the measures the Government have taken to implement the recommendations following David Quarmby's independent review on Winter Resilience, published in October 2010. The letter also drew attention to the recommendations in the review panel's report which were addressed to local authorities.

A representative of the Local Government Association attended the inter-ministerial meeting on winter response held at the Cabinet Office on 3 December.

Given that much of the country is being hit unusually early this winter by severe weather, the Secretary of State for Transport has asked David Quarmby to take the opportunity to conduct an urgent audit of highway authorities' and transport operators' recent performance in England, their progress in implementing his recommendations and any further steps that need to be taken.

John Woodcock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will estimate the amount and proportion of *(a)* salt, *(b)* grit and *(c)* potash the Highways Agency will procure from (i) British and (ii) overseas suppliers in 2010-11; [29045]

(2) if he will estimate the proportion of the Highways Agency's budget that will be spent procuring *(a)* salt, *(b)* grit and *(c)* potash from (i) British and (ii) overseas suppliers in 2010-11. [29046]

Mike Penning *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* Grit and potash are not used for routine winter service on Highways Agency roads.

It is not possible for the Highways Agency to estimate the amount and proportion of salt to be procured from British and overseas suppliers in 2010-11 or the proportion of its budget that will be spent on procuring salt.

The Highways Agency's contracted service providers are responsible for the delivery of the winter service, including the procurement of road salt.

The delivery of winter service is paid for within lump sum payments covering a range of defined activities. The amount spent on the purchase of road salt is not readily discernible from the service delivery lump sum payments and cannot therefore be provided.

In addition to the provision of routine winter services, the Highways Agency has been tasked with a strategic stockpile to provide additional resilience for local authorities. The Government anticipates that the full cost of procuring the strategic stockpile will be recovered from those local authorities which use it.

Welsh Language

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when his Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses these can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31170]

Norman Baker: A Welsh language scheme was last published by the Department for Transport in 2004, and is maintained as a live document.

The scheme is available on the corporate website in Welsh at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/foi/dftps/cynlluniaithgymraegdft

and in English at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/foi/dftps/dftwelshlanguagescheme

Copies of the scheme, in both languages, have been placed in the House Libraries.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Public Transport

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on what dates since his appointment he has in the course of his official duties *(a)* taken a scheduled bus service, *(b)* travelled on the London underground, *(c)* travelled on a scheduled tram service and *(d)* cycled. [30401]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I travel making the most efficient and cost-effective arrangements; including by public transport. My travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel as set out in the Ministerial Code.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Addison Lee

Julie Elliott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the public bodies for which it is responsible contract services from Addison Lee. [30705]

Chris Grayling: The Department for Work and Pensions entered into a contract with Addison Lee plc on 1 May 2010 for a period of two years, for the provision of a Taxi Sourcing, Booking, Delivery and Management service.

The contract is for the provision of vehicles for the transportation of staff for business purposes only, for journeys originating within the M25 (and extending out to local airports).

Employment Schemes

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects his Department's Work Programme to begin; and when he expects its predecessor programmes to close. [26256]

Chris Grayling: We want to ensure that as many people benefit from the Work Programme as soon as possible, and will launch the Work Programme as soon as providers are ready to start delivery in each contract package area. We aim to have the new Work Programme in place nationally by the summer of 2011.

We are determined to ensure that there is continuity of provision, and that the transition to the Work Programme does not leave any customer unsupported. Therefore, new deal and employment zone contracts will be extended until June 2011, ensuring that customers referred to these programmes in March will be supported until the summer, when the Work Programme will be rolled out.

Before their referral to the Work Programme, customers will have access to support delivered through Jobcentre Plus, including access to work experience, help to volunteer or take advantage of peer-to-peer support, as well as help with basic skills or jobsearch techniques and access to the Jobcentre Plus flexible fund.

Future Jobs Fund

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many young people have been employed through the Future Jobs Fund in each region in each month of the fund's operation; and how much has been spent under the fund in each region. [29279]

Chris Grayling: We have placed the number of young people that have been employed by the Future Jobs Fund (FJF) in each region in each month of the fund's operation in the Library. This information has been compiled from the Official Statistics up to July 2010.

Annex A provides the overall total spend per region up to 18 November 2010. This information has been taken from the FJF Combined and Monitoring Claim Form (CMCF) process which is FJF expenditure that is claimed by lead accountable bodies (LABs) via the monthly claims process.

Jobcentre Plus: Advisory Services

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make funding available to jobcentres to take on staff to advise incapacity benefit claimants on finding work. [28331]

Chris Grayling: Funding already exists through the Pathways to Work programme to help incapacity benefit customers find work.

The Government have announced they will be replacing many of the existing back to work programmes with the Work Programme. This is expected to be in place nationally by the summer of 2011. Incapacity benefit customers will be able to access the Work Programme, if, following reassessment for employment and support allowance (ESA), they go on to claim ESA or jobseeker's allowance.

More personalised Jobcentre Plus support will also be available to all customers in receipt of working age benefits. Incapacity benefit customers may volunteer to access this support.

Jobcentre Plus: Buildings

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 165W, on Jobcentre Plus: buildings, what the average rent per square metre is for Jobcentre Plus premises in London. [31044]

Chris Grayling: The average rent per square metre for Jobcentre Plus premises in London is £140.

Maternity Payments: Coventry

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Sure Start maternity grants were made to mothers resident in Coventry for a second or subsequent child in 2009-10. [30804]

Steve Webb: A total of 274,000 Sure Start maternity grants were awarded in Great Britain in 2009-10. The exact number of awards for a second or subsequent maternity is not available, but is estimated to be 52% of all awards, around 143,000.

The number of awards made in 2009-10 is available by Government office region or Jobcentre Plus social fund budget area only, not by local authority.

Notes:

1. The information provided is Management Information. Our preference is to answer all parliamentary questions using Official/National Statistics but in this case we only have management information available. It is not quality assured to the same extent as Official/National Statistics and there are some issues with the data, for example, the total given does not include awards processed clerically which had not been entered on to the Social Fund Computer System by the end of 2009-10.

2. Both numbers have been rounded to the nearest 1,000.

Sources:

Department for Work and Pensions Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System (for total number of awards for Great Britain).

The estimate of 52% was obtained by analysing families in Great Britain with a child (or children) aged under one from the Department for Work and Pensions Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance Quarterly Statistical Enquiries for August 2009. (This was considered the most appropriate available data at the time the analysis was done.)

Members: Correspondence

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to reply to question 19837 on benefit claims, tabled on 24 November 2010 for ordinary written answer. [29614]

Chris Grayling: I replied to the hon. Member's question on 8 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 276-77W.

Pensioners: Poverty

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of pensioners aged *(a)* between 60 and 65, *(b)* between 65 and 70, *(c)* between 70 and 75, *(d)* between 75 and 80 and *(e)* over 80 years old were living in poverty in 1997. [31416]

Steve Webb: Estimates of pensioner poverty are published in the Households Below Average Incomes series. The most commonly used measure of pensioner poverty relates to those people with incomes below 60% of contemporary median income, after housing costs. This is often referred to as relative poverty.

The Households Below Average Income publication uses Family Resources Survey data. Data for Northern Ireland have been collected only since 2002-03. Estimates of poverty for 2001-02 and earlier are for Great Britain only, but from 2002-03 are for the United Kingdom. The percentage of pensioners in relative poverty in Great Britain in 1997-98, split by age group, is shown in the following table:

Age group	*Percentage with income below 60% of contemporary median after housing costs*[1]
60-64	20
65-69	22
70-74	30
75-79	37
80 and above	37
All pensioners	29

[1] Relative poverty.

Notes:

1. These statistics are based on the Households Below Average Income series, sourced from the Family Resources Survey.

2. The estimates presented here are Great Britain only, as Northern Ireland data was not collected until 2002-03.

3. All estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to uncertainty. Small differences should be treated with caution as these will be affected by sampling error and variability in non-response.

4. The income measures used to derive the estimates shown employ the same methodology as the Department for Work and Pensions publication "Households Below Average Income" (HBAI) series, which uses disposable household income, adjusted (or "equivalised") for household size and composition, as an income measure as a proxy for standard of living.

5. For the Households Below Average Income series, incomes have been equivalised using Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) modified equivalisation factors.

6. Proportions of pensioners in low-income households have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.

Social Security Benefits

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria he plans to use to determine whether benefit claimants have deliberately not informed the relevant agency of a change in their circumstances. [30805]

Chris Grayling: Where a customer deliberately does not inform the Department of a reportable change in circumstance this would constitute benefit fraud. The Fraud Investigation Service investigates cases thoroughly, and an admission of fraud or proof beyond reasonable doubt are the criteria used to determine whether fraud has been committed.

The Department takes fraud very seriously and has recently published a new joint strategy with HMRC for tackling welfare fraud and error. This sets out a strong sanctions regime to punish those who are caught committing benefit fraud and includes a new civil penalty for genuine mistakes.

Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the level of savings which will accrue to his Department as a result of the decision to suspend work-focused health-related assessments. [28736]

Chris Grayling: It is estimated that the suspension of work-focused health-related assessments (WFHRAs) will save the Department around £5 million per year.

Our decision to suspend WFHRAs was based on feedback from customers and staff which indicated that they were not providing valuable support. The suspension of WFHRAs will improve the Department's capacity to focus on, and cope with, the reassessment of existing incapacity benefits customers, which began in Aberdeen and Burnley in October.

Although they do not currently attend WFHRAs at the beginning of their claim, individuals in the Work Related Activity Group meet regularly with their personal advisers within Jobcentre Plus or Provider-led Pathways to Work. Personal advisers help customers to focus on what they can do to get a job, taking any medical condition into account.

By the summer of 2011, we will introduce the Work Programme which will give providers greater freedom to tailor the right support to the individual needs of each customer. Providers will be best placed to assess a customer's needs and abilities, in the context of the support that is available.

Unemployed People: Training

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the maximum length of time is that a claimant of jobseeker's allowance may attend a training course while retaining their benefit; and what assessment he has made of the appropriateness of this period. [28456]

Chris Grayling: Jobseeker's allowance is designed to support people while they are unemployed and looking for work. To be eligible, jobseekers must therefore be available for and actively seeking employment. Unless specific exemptions apply, they must be willing and able to take up full-time work immediately.

Jobseekers can however undertake part-time education or training at any point in their claim and continue to receive jobseeker's allowance as long as they continue to meet the basic conditions of entitlement.

Jobseeker's allowance claimants may also undertake full-time training if this is needed in order to gain the necessary skills to enhance employment prospects. While undertaking two weeks of work-related training within any 12-month period claimants can remain on jobseeker's allowance. This is agreed by the adviser and it can be combined with part-time learning to give a longer period of support.

Within limits, jobseekers may also undertake full-time training for longer than two weeks where it is deemed appropriate in order to help towards a move into employment. Currently, jobseekers who undertake full-time training in excess of two weeks are transferred to a separate training allowance. Full-time training opportunities for jobseekers are ideally no more than eight weeks long as short, intensive periods of work-focused training better achieves the purpose of the jobseeker's allowance interventions regime of helping people find employment as quickly as possible. Those with basic skills needs (for example literacy and numeracy) may be able to remain on full-time training for 15 weeks or longer.

The current approach maintains a balance between enabling unemployed people to provide access to training while keeping claimants close to the labour market. Where there are identified skills barriers to work they can be tackled through structured provision.

From summer 2011 we will also be launching nationwide the Work Programme, which will provide personalised and individual services to claimants to support them into work. Work Programme providers will be free to design support according to the needs of the individuals referred to them; this may include training courses which the claimant can undertake while still retaining their benefit.

Universal Credit

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions under what circumstances recipients of universal credit will be expected to identify *(a)* administrative errors in their payments and *(b)* errors in real-time earnings data supplied by employers. [28207]

Chris Grayling: As under the current system, we will expect all customers to report to us if they become aware that any of their payments are incorrect. However, with the availability of real time information about their earnings, the potential for errors and overpayments will be dramatically reduced as people will not have to report changes in earnings.

Welfare Tax Credits: Overpayments

Teresa Pearce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to provide for *(a)* the exercise of discretion and *(b)* a de minimis level in respect of any overpayment of tax credits where the claimant has failed to take reasonable care before the proposed £50 civil penalty is imposed. [22012]

Chris Grayling: On 18 October the Government published their new strategy, "Tackling fraud and error in the benefit and tax credits systems". The strategy announced the introduction of a new £50 civil penalty for those individuals who fail to take reasonable care of their claim.

The civil penalty will apply to customer error and not fraud. Customer error applies in cases where there is no fraudulent intent on behalf of the customer and a change in circumstance goes unreported as a genuine mistake. Where a customer deliberately does not inform the Department of a reportable change in circumstance this constitutes benefit fraud. The Fraud Investigation Service investigate such cases thoroughly, and an admission of fraud or proof beyond reasonable doubt are the criteria used to determine whether fraud has been committed.

This new penalty will not apply to tax credits as the Tax Credits Act already includes a civil penalty. For Social Security benefits, it is too early to confirm the criteria that will be used when considering the penalty such as *(a)* the exercise of discretion and *(b)* a de minimis level. However, it is intended that the penalty will deter individuals from negligent behaviour in the future and increase their personal responsibility for keeping claims correct.

There will be a clear appeals process in place where individuals can appeal against the overpayment decision (as currently exists) and also against the decision to instigate the penalty.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Government Hospitality: Wines

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many bottles of wine from the Government wine cellar have been served at Government functions since 1 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of serving such wines. [31110]

Mr Bellingham: Between 1 November and 13 December 2010 Government Hospitality used 494 bottles of wine at 23 Government functions, for approximately 1,376 guests. The functions were a combination of receptions, lunches and dinners. Government Hospitality estimates that the total purchase cost of these wines amounted to £4,735, an average of less than £10 per bottle.

Liu Xiaobo

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the government of the People's Republic of China on the release of Liu Xiaobo. [31334]

Mr Jeremy Browne: In a statement to mark International Human Rights Day on 10 December 2010, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary sent a message of support to human rights defenders around the world. Highlighting the important work of human rights defenders, the Foreign Secretary said,

> "We remember in particular Liu Xiaobo, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize but is imprisoned in China, and we call again for his release".

Our Ministers have consistently raised the case of Liu Xiaobo in their engagement with China. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised the case during his visit to China in July this year. We will continue to urge the Chinese Government to release Mr Liu.

Piracy

Mr Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his international counterparts on rules of engagement in counter-piracy operations. [28135]

Nick Harvey: I have been asked to reply.

As a participant in the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, the UK has discussions with partners on the legal questions and concerns affecting the international response to Somali piracy. These have included the appropriate use of force in counter-piracy operations, although rules of engagement themselves are not discussed.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has had no recent discussions with its international counterparts on the rules of engagement in counter-piracy operations because this is primarily a military matter. Therefore the matter is one which the Ministry of Defence leads on rather than the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The UK operates with a number of international partners on counter-piracy operations including the European Union's Operation Atalanta, NATO's Operation Ocean Shield and the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) and operational tactics are discussed regularly as part of this. Our rules of engagement are shared with our coalition partners as necessary to improve international co-ordination.

South America: Corruption

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of levels of corruption in *(a)* Argentina and *(b)* Venezuela. [31087]

Mr Jeremy Browne: According to Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index 2010, Venezuela ranks 164th and Argentina 105th out of 178 countries.

In Argentina, the Government have taken measures in recent years to address the issue, for example through the reform of the process for nominating Supreme Court judges. A Bill on access to information is also being considered by Congress.

The Venezuelan Government have publicly recognised corruption as an issue requiring attention. The creation of a new national police force is an important part of an attempt to address the issue, and the UK is working with the authorities on police reform issues.

Our embassies monitor corruption levels and offer support to any British individual, company or organisation which may be affected by corruption.

China: Africa

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will hold discussions with his Chinese counterpart on the extent of deforestation on Chinese-owned land in Africa used for the development of palm oil plantations. [29938]

Richard Benyon: I have been asked to reply.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department for International Development are working in partnership with China on a project on the international palm oil industry. This involves outlining the business case for sustainable sourcing, including on investments abroad. The project will conclude in March 2011 with a report and policy options, which we will then discuss with the Chinese Ministry of Commerce.

With regards to our consumption in the UK, the Secretary of State and I announced on 13 July 2010 that DEFRA has commissioned a project to map UK palm oil supply chains (including those specific to government procurement), to determine how much we use (including future trends) and in what products. It will identify existing company commitments to sourcing sustainable palm oil and the implications for the sustainability of palm oil consumed in the UK, as well as considering options for encouraging increased sustainable sourcing. The project has involved participation from international businesses, non-governmental organisations and other Governments, and will report in February 2011.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture: Land

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many disputes were heard by each agricultural land tribunal in each of the last 10 years. [28985]

Mr Paice: The number of cases heard by each agricultural land tribunal from 2002 until 2009 inclusive are set out in the following table. We do not have details for the two years previous to that.

	South Western	Eastern	South Eastern	Midlands	Yorks & Humber	Northern	Western
2002	13	4	4	[1]11	[1]7	[1]7	[1]15
2003	10	4	1	[1]8	[1]7	[1]7	[1]16
2004	6	17	6	14	13	7	25
2005	7	7	10	7	12	3	12
2006	9	8	7	6	13	5	16
2007	2	11	2	[1]2	[1]4	[1]0	[1]9
2008	3	6	3	10	4	4	5
2009	10	2	6	5	3	0	7

[1] Indicates that figures are incomplete as a full set of records are unavailable for these areas within the year shown.

Agriculture: Weather

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects of recent severe weather on farmers; and if she will make a statement. [30330]

Mr Paice: We have maintained close contact with farming organisations throughout the recent severe weather conditions. This has allowed us to support farmers in responding to a range of issues, including relaxing drivers' hours for hauliers supplying feed to farms so that animal welfare is not compromised; relaxing the rules on supplementary feeding to help livestock farmers who are in agri-environment schemes; and monitoring the position on milk collections.

DEFRA and Animal Health have published advice for farmers on their websites on what they should do to protect the welfare of their animals. DEFRA remains in close touch with the industry and will continue to look at whether there are additional, specific measures that need to be put in place to ease problems.

Farmers in many areas have made a significant contribution to helping their local communities cope with the extreme circumstances.

Birds of Prey

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will assess the merits of taking steps to reduce the number of birds of prey in the countryside. [30567]

Richard Benyon: Many bird of prey populations in the UK have recovered in the latter part of the 20th century following severe declines, and in some cases national or regional extinctions. These declines were due to the impacts of illegal persecution and secondary poisoning by pesticides used in agriculture.

The interaction between birds of prey and various countryside interests (in particular, lowland game rearing, pigeon racing and driven grouse shooting) have been the subject of considerable research involving stakeholder organisations and other interested parties. These studies have demonstrated that a wide range of practical management techniques are available to reduce or eliminate these conflicts with birds of prey. There are no current plans to assess the merits of reducing bird of prey populations.

Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's procedure is for blood testing of camelids suspected of having TB; and if she will make a statement. [30396]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: Because of the poor sensitivity of the tuberculin skin test in South American camelids (llamas, alpacas, etc.), voluntary blood testing for TB can be offered to herd owners. This is currently at the Government's expense and subject to a veterinary risk assessment by Animal Health (AH). Although only optional for herd owners as it is not yet fully validated in camelids, blood testing is often recommended in order to maximise the chances of detecting all infected animals that may remain in these herds and thus speed up the resolution of the TB outbreak.

The case veterinary officer will discuss the TB testing options and implications with the affected herd owner. Herd owners must then signify their intention to co-operate with the TB testing regime and release any animals testing positive by signing a standard letter of consent. If the owner agrees to supplement the skin test with blood testing, AH will take blood samples from all the potentially exposed animals remaining in the herd. This will normally take place 10 to 30 days after a skin test.

Blood testing of camelids is currently undergoing full validation at Veterinary Laboratories Agency as part of a project largely funded by the British Alpaca Society and British Camelids Ltd. It is hoped that a suite of validated blood tests for camelids will be available by the end of 2011.

Compost: Mushrooms

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with her EU counterparts on odour emissions from mushroom composting. [29502]

Richard Benyon: There have been no ministerial discussions with EU counterparts on odour emissions from mushroom composting. However, officials have conducted investigations with various sources in different member states.

I understand that some local authorities, who are responsible for regulating mushroom composting operations, have also made inquiries abroad.

Dairy Farming

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with representatives of farm businesses on the likely environmental impact of the introduction of individual dairy and beef units of up to 3,000 cattle. [30200]

Mr Paice: I cannot comment about individual units or the impacts of their introduction.

However, when I have held my regular discussions with representatives of farming organisations and the subject of large scale dairy farms has been raised, I have emphasised that all legislation, including animal welfare and environmental legislation, must be complied with whatever the size of unit. I have also pointed out that environmental gains may be more easily achieved on larger scale farms through spreading the cost of investment in technologies such as anaerobic digestion.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30033]

Richard Benyon: There is no specified annual budget for conferences held within the Department.

In response to the arrangements for advertising and marketing put in place by the Government, DEFRA has established an internal panel to consider all proposals for expenditure arising from communication activity. As a result business areas are required to gain approval prior to arranging conferences and are expected to fund these using local budgets.

Approval has been given to expenditure on seven conferences. Five were approved following reduction in costs requested by the panel. Two were accepted by the panel without change. The total cost of these seven conferences was £34,285.

Departmental NDPBs

Mr Shepherd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which of the non-departmental public bodies that she plans to abolish will have their responsibilities subsumed into her Department. [30443]

Richard Benyon: In the case of some of the bodies we are abolishing, some of the work will return to the Department. However in many cases the decision to pursue abolition has been taken because there is no need for the function to continue.

The following science and technical advisory non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) will be reclassified as expert committees to the Department:

Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances
Advisory Committee on Packaging
Advisory Committee on Pesticides
Air Quality Expert Group
Darwin Advisory Committee
Farm Animal Welfare Council
National Standing Committee on Farm Animal Genetic Resources
Pesticide Residues Committee
Veterinary Residues Committee
Zoos Forum

It is proposed that the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) will be abolished, subject to obtaining the necessary powers through the Public Bodies Bill. A new Rural Communities Policy Unit will be created in DEFRA to expand on the Government's existing rural policy work and to act as a centre of rural expertise within government. The unit will also take over from CRC responsibility for managing the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) National Rural Network.

In addition, responsibility for delivery of parts of the socio-economic elements of the RDPE will transfer from the eight regional development agencies (which are the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills) to DEFRA.

With regard to the Sustainable Development Commission, the Secretary of State has decided to transfer specific elements of two of its functions into DEFRA. These include elements of capability building and stakeholder engagement.

DEFRA has also announced that the Inland Waterways Advisory Council will be abolished. We have decided that an arm's length body is no longer needed to help develop policy for the inland waterways—instead, this should be the clear role of Government Departments and Ministers. Therefore, in future we will develop policy by consulting all interests directly, including making full use of the evidence which can be provided by the navigation authorities and having a closer relationship with stakeholders.

Mr Shepherd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff at each civil service grade employed in non-departmental bodies that will have their responsibilities subsumed into her Department will have a right of transfer into her Department; and when she expects such transfers to take place. [30444]

Richard Benyon: We are considering which functions currently in non-departmental bodies will transfer into the Department in accordance with the Cabinet Office Statement of Practice on Staff Transfers in the Public Sector (COSOP). It is not therefore possible to say how many staff in total will have a right to transfer into the Department.

However, decisions have been taken in respect of the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) as follows.

Sixteen CRC staff members had the right to transfer into Core DEFRA. Fourteen have exercised this right and two have not. The 14 CRC staff transferred into DEFRA on 1 December 2010. The grade profile of these staff is as follows:

Table 1: Number of CRC staff, by grade, who have transferred to the core Department

Grade	*Number of staff*
EO	2
HEO	4
SEO	2
G7	3
G6	3

Table 2: Number of CRC staff, by grade, that declined transfer to the core Department

Grade	*Number of staff*
EO	1
SEO	1

Mr Shepherd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what criteria she has set to determine the right of transfer into her Department of staff employed in non-departmental bodies that will have their responsibilities subsumed into her Department. [30445]

Richard Benyon: We are currently looking at the potential transfer rights of staff in accordance with Cabinet Office Statement of Practice on Staff Transfers in the Public Sector (COSOP) in respect of the bodies which will have responsibilities returned to the Department. Except for those relating to the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) we have not yet finalised the numbers involved.

COSOP has been followed and adhered to, in order to determine the right of CRC staff to transfer into the Department. While the commission's statutory functions are not being transferred, some of the commission's work is already replicated in the Department and those staff associated with this work therefore have the right to transfer.

Departmental Travel

Paul Maynard: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department spent on grey fleet in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [28856]

Richard Benyon: The Department, including its Executive agencies, reimbursed payments to staff for mileage incurred on the grey fleet in each year as follows:

(a) 2008-09: £3,710,190.97

(b) 2009-10: £3,676,091.87.

Farmers

Sajid Javid: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress her Department has made on reducing the regulatory burden on farmers. [29699]

Mr Paice: One of the first actions was to appoint Richard MacDonald to lead a taskforce to identify ways of reducing regulatory burdens on farmers. It recently completed a public consultation and will make recommendations to Government by April 2011. I hope it will bring about a change in culture in implementing regulations while maintaining standards.

Farmers: Poverty

Anne Marie Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has had recent discussions on the number of farmers living below the poverty line; and if she will make a statement. [29228]

Mr Paice: The most recent data on the Incomes and Compositions of Farm Households in England were published by DEFRA on 15 July 2010 and can be found at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/evidence/statistics/foodfarm/farmmanage/fbs/published-data/farmhouseholdincome/index.htm

Farm household income figures are derived from the Farm Business Survey (FBS) and are measured on a gross basis, before tax, while assessments of households' living standards are usually made on the basis of income net of tax, based on the Family Resources Survey. Given the significant differences between the two measures of household income and the difficulty of making appropriate adjustments to place them on a comparable basis, direct comparisons are no longer made between the two surveys.

Based on the most recent report an analysis of the incomes and assets of farm household population by quartile, according to the level of household income of the principal farmer, is shown as follows. Farm business income refers only to income deriving from the farm business and, unlike household income, excludes income from other sources. It should be noted that 46% of businesses in the bottom quartile were classified as part-time, with insufficient agricultural enterprises to keep one person occupied on a full-time basis. This compares with 28% overall.

Farm household income, business income, net worth, total assets and drawings by principal farmer household income quartiles, England average 2006-07 to 2008-09

£

Quartile	*Farm household income range*	*Median household income*	*Median farm business income*	*Median drawings*	*Median business net worth*	*Median business total assets*
Bottom	<20,100	11,300	4,100	14,300	409,000	484,000
Second	20,100<37,200	27,800	20,600	21,500	501,000	545,000
Third	37,200<64,000	47,600	40,300	30,900	694,000	737,000
Top	>64,000	87,800	86,400	54,500	1,113,000	1,263,000
All-farms		37,200	27,900	26,200	597,000	677,000

Source:
Farm Business Survey (England)

One of DEFRA's priorities is to help to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of the whole food chain, including farms, and we therefore want to see a farming sector that is competitive and profitable. That is why we are calling for ambitious reform of the common agricultural policy in order to improve the industry's ability to respond to consumer demand, introducing the grocery code adjudicator to ensure that everyone in the food supply chain gets a fair deal, and have established a task force to conduct an industry-led review of existing farm regulations. Additionally we are providing funding to increase industry competiveness through the Rural Development Programme for England, funding scientific research into increasing food production sustainably, and working with industry to improve skills across the food chain.

Floods: Steart Peninsula

Mr Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* land acquisition cost and *(b)* total cost is of the project to flood Steart Peninsula; and if she will make a statement. [29725]

Richard Benyon: The total indicative scheme costs for the Steart Peninsula flood management projects are estimated to be between £17 million and £20 million. Land acquisition accounts for £5-7 million of the costs. Options for efficiencies will be considered as the proposal develops.

Mr Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons the Environment Agency has undertaken its development of Steart Peninsula; what progress has been made on the project to date; and if she will make a statement. [29726]

Richard Benyon: The Environment Agency's assessment of its proposed programme of flood and erosion risk management in the Severn Estuary to protect people and property indicates that it will lead to a loss of habitat within the Severn Estuary Special Protection Area. Where areas protected by the European Habitats Directive are lost due to flood management projects, the Government are required to secure compensatory measures to ensure the overall coherence of the network of protected sites.

The Steart Peninsular has been identified by the Environment Agency as the most cost effective place in the Severn Estuary for this work. The agency is planning to start constructing the main works in the summer of 2012, subject to funding.

Food: Consumption

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to increase the proportion of food consumed which has been produced domestically. [30202]

Mr Paice: As set out in the DEFRA Business Plan, our priority is to support and develop British farming and encourage sustainable food production. We will work to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of the food chain, including farms and the fish industry, to help ensure a secure, environmentally sustainable and healthy supply of food. Currently the UK produces the equivalent of 72% of indigenous foods and 59% of our food overall.

The Fruit and Vegetables Task Force identified barriers to increasing domestic production and consumption of fruit and vegetables in England. It published a report of its proposals and produced an Action Plan outlining how to implement many of these proposals.

We will also work to create an environment where consumers are able to make informed choice, including working with industry for better information on nutrition, food safety, provenance and quality e.g. encouraging the whole food supply chain to work together to provide clearer origin information and working with specialist producers to help them apply for registration under the protected food name schemes.

Forests: Democratic Republic of Congo

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will hold discussions with her Chinese counterpart on the effects on the primate population in the Democratic Republic of Congo of deforestation on Chinese-owned land used for the development of palm oil plantations. [29939]

Richard Benyon: DEFRA and the Department for International Development are working in partnership with China on a project on the international palm oil industry. This involves outlining the business case for sustainable sourcing, including on investments abroad. The project will conclude in March 2011 with a report and policy options, which we will then discuss with the Chinese Ministry of Commerce.

With regard to our consumption in the UK, the Secretary of State and I announced on 13 July that DEFRA has commissioned a project to map UK palm oil supply chains (including those specific to government procurement), to determine how much we use (including future trends) and in what products. It will identify existing company commitments to sourcing sustainable palm oil and the implications for the sustainability of palm oil consumed in the UK, as well as considering options for encouraging increased sustainable sourcing. The project has involved participation from international businesses, NGOs and other Governments, and will report in February 2011.

Hill Farming

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of hill farmers farming in each county of England in each of the last 10 years. [29749]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* There is no formal definition of a hill farm, but the numbers of farm holdings by county in England from 2000-09, within both the less favoured area (LFA) classification and the severely disadvantaged areas (SDA) classification, are shown in a spreadsheet which has been placed in the House Library.

The data are sourced from the June Survey of Agriculture farm register. A holding is designated as being in the LFA or SDA if the central grid reference for the holding falls within the boundaries of that classification, even if the whole farm is not within the LFA or SDA classification.

Otters

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information her Department holds on the number of otters in the UK in each of the last five years. [30568]

Richard Benyon: National surveys of otters for England and Wales have been carried out at approximately seven year intervals since the late 1970s but the results do not represent individual otter numbers.

The Environment Agency recently published results from the Fifth Otter Survey of England, commissioned in 2009-10. The results show an increase in sites showing signs of otter from 36.3% in 2000-02 to 58.8% in 2009-10.

Distribution patterns suggest that population densities in the south-west, parts of northern England and along the Welsh borders have reached levels comparable to before the pesticide-related decline of the 1960s-1970s. Similar recovery across the whole country is expected to take another 10-20 years.

The Fifth Otter Survey of England is available to view on the Environment Agency website.

The Fifth Otter Survey in Wales was carried out in 2010 and the data are still being analysed by the Environment Agency.

This is a devolved matter and information is not held for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Port of Falmouth Development Plan

Sarah Newton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the reasons are for the time taken to consider the applications for the marine consents for the Port of Falmouth Development Plan; and when she expects to have completed the assessment of those applications. [30312]

Richard Benyon: Authority to make licensing decisions for such marine construction work has been delegated to the Marine Management Organisation. I understand a decision is expected shortly.

Chemicals: Regulation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assistance her Department has provided to businesses required to register under the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals Regulation since the passage of the Regulation. [30373]

Mr Paice: The REACH Regulation makes no provision for the Government to provide direct financial assistance to businesses required to register chemicals. European state aid and competition rules also preclude provision of direct financial assistance. However, DEFRA and the UK REACH Competent Authority Helpdesk provide free information and advice about REACH implementation to UK businesses by e-mail, telephone, and on the internet. DEFRA and the Department for Business Innovation and Skills have also arranged periodic publication in HM Revenue and Custom's Employers' Bulletin of articles reminding businesses of registration duties and providing advice about best practice in preparations for registration.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has received on the cost to businesses of applying for registration under the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals Regulation. [29489]

Mr Paice: Since May, DEFRA has received six written or electronic representations about the costs to business of REACH registration, all from small-medium enterprises (SMEs). These ranged from concerns about the direct financial costs to concerns about potential costs caused by interruption of supplies arising from failure by suppliers to register chemicals used, or by their not having included downstream uses in chemical registrations.

REACH places responsibility for preparations for registration, including cost sharing, firmly on industry, with no formal role given to the regulatory authorities. While this has meant that authorities have not been able to intervene directly in addressing industry concerns about REACH registration, DEFRA and the UK REACH Competent Authority (provided by the Health and Safety Executive) have provided guidance and advice on best practice. In the case of downstream users' concerns about continuity of supply, my right hon. Friends, the Secretaries of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and for Business, Innovation and Skills, wrote jointly in October to the relevant European Commissioners to draw attention to the issues and propose a course of action to address the concerns.

REACH itself provides a number of measures to assist SMEs with the costs of registration, including a reduced scale of fees, with further discounts for participation in data sharing. While the Government are constrained by EU competition and state aid rules from providing direct financial assistance to companies for registration costs, the European Investment Bank is offering a loan facility to SMEs that can be used to cover REACH-related costs. Where appropriate, we have drawn attention to this facility in responses to representations from businesses.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the effect on pure metal importers of the implementation of the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals Regulation. [29490]

Mr Paice: We have made no specific assessment of the effect of REACH implementation on pure metal importers, or any other sector of UK industry, although some sectors were studied in the Impact Assessment carried out while REACH was being negotiated. We are currently considering how best we can practically assess the impact of REACH on UK industry, in a way which disaggregates REACH impacts from those of other legislative regimes and wider economic developments.

Sewers

Mr Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent progress her Department has made on the transfer of private drains and sewers to water companies; and if she will make a statement. [30387]

Richard Benyon: Between 26 August and 18 November 2010 DEFRA and the Welsh Assembly Government undertook a joint public consultation exercise, which included workshops, on draft regulations and proposals for schemes for the transfer of private sewers. A summary of the consultation can be viewed on DEFRA's website at:

- http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/private-sewers/index.htm

The draft regulations are currently being finalised, after which they will be presented to Parliament for approval.

Slaughterhouses

Mr Charles Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what legal requirements are placed on abattoirs and slaughterhouses with regard to the stunning of animals prior to bleeding out; and if she will make a statement. [29153]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* Slaughterhouse operators are responsible for the welfare of animals at the time of slaughter. The rules governing animal welfare at slaughter and killing are set out in the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995, as amended (WASK). Under these regulations it is an offence to cause or permit an animal avoidable excitement, pain or suffering. There are also specific requirements that must be followed on handling, stunning, slaughter or killing of animals. In particular:

anyone carrying out any of these tasks must have the knowledge and skill to do their job humanely and efficiently;

all slaughtermen must be competent and hold a registered licence;

in every slaughterhouse a competent person must be given authority to take action to safeguard welfare; and

only permitted methods may be used to stun or kill animals.

Schedule 12 of WASK sets out the detailed requirements that apply where animals are slaughtered by a religious method to meet Jewish and Muslim religious beliefs. These requirements ensure all slaughter by a religious method is undertaken in licensed slaughterhouses (approved premises), and Official Veterinarians of the Food Standards Agency Operations Group monitor and enforce the rules set out in the regulations daily.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has received from *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* Members of the House of Lords and *(c)* members of the public on the welfare of animals in slaughterhouses; what response was given in each case; and if she will make a statement. [29804]

Mr Paice: Since 1 May 2010, DEFRA Ministers have received 141 letters from hon. Members, one from a Member of the House of Lords and 319 letters from members of the public on the welfare of animals in slaughterhouses.

The Food Standards Agency conducted a survey of all approved slaughterhouses in May 2010 to establish whether food business operators are taking active steps to comply with legal requirements and achieve the necessary animal welfare standards. The survey also looked at whether Official Veterinarians and frontline teams are carrying out their roles effectively, with appropriate monitoring and relevant enforcement being taken in the event of food business operator non-compliance. This survey indicated standards of animal welfare met or exceeded legislative requirements in 94% of premises surveyed.

Timber: Consumption

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much coppiced sweet chestnut was used by the building trade in *(a)* 2007, *(b)* 2008 and *(c)* 2009. [29944]

Mr Paice: We are not able to provide this information. This is because the Forestry Commission does not collect comprehensive information on the end use of home grown timber.

Waste Disposal: Motor Vehicles

Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the performance against targets for *(a)* reuse, *(b)* recycling and *(c)* recovery of vehicles under the End-of-Life Vehicles (Producer Responsibility) Regulations 2005 she expects to be attributable to auto shredder residue recovered as energy from waste after 2015. [30525]

Richard Benyon *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* The end-of-life vehicles (ELV) directive sets an overall 95% reuse and recovery target from 2015. Under the structure of the target, reuse and recycling activities must contribute at least 85%.

Energy from waste does not constitute reuse or recycling. The combustion of waste can constitute a recovery operation, and so contribute to the ELV recovery target, where its principal objective is that the waste can fulfil a useful function as a means of generating energy, replacing the use of a source of primary energy.

Technologies to treat vehicles to the required target standards continue to be developed, with scope to build on existing ELV energy recovery, such as the use of tyres removed from ELVs as a replacement fuel in cement kilns.

CABINET OFFICE

Charities: Public Expenditure

Mr Offord: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what effect the outcome of the comprehensive spending review had on the level of funding for charities, voluntary groups and social enterprises wishing to become local service providers. [31543]

Mr Hurd: The coalition Government has created new opportunities for the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and has put forward measures to support the sector. For example the recently announced £100 million Transition Fund will give the sector the breathing space it needs to enable it to manage the transition to a tighter funding environment and to take advantage of future opportunities presented by the Big Society.

It is currently too early to evaluate the impact of the comprehensive spending review on voluntary and community groups; however the Cabinet Office is working closely with partners in the sector, across Government and the Third Sector Research Centre to examine the exposure of the sector to public spending reductions and mitigate potential impacts.

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28119]

Mr Maude: In the Coalition Agreement the Government made a commitment to promote small business procurement in the public sector, with an aspiration that 25% of Government contracts should be awarded to SMEs.

On 1 November 2010 we announced a package of measures intended to make Government procurement easier for SMEs and voluntary sector organisations by simplifying the procurement process and making opportunities more accessible. These measures include the introduction of a simpler standardised pre-qualification questionnaire which is mandated across central Government from 1 December 2010; a "Lean" study investigating red tape and causes of delay in the procurement process; and from March 2011 the 'Contracts Finder' system—a free facility for small businesses to find public sector procurement, and sub contracting, opportunities in a single place online and free of charge.

We are consulting further on facilitating voluntary sector access to public procurement. Moreover the Government have today launched a forum on the No. 10 website for SMEs to give their views on public procurement from which we will be able to take further action.

Electorate

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the electorate was of each constituency in *(a)* 2009 and *(b)* 2010. [31414]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your question asking what the electorate of each constituency was in (a) 2009 and (b) 2010 (31414).

Figures showing the number of registered electors in each parliamentary constituency as at 1 December 2010 are not currently available. These are due to be published on 23 February 2011.

Figures showing the number of registered electors in each parliamentary constituency as at 1 December 2009 are available on the ONS website at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_other/uk-electoral-statistics-2009.xls

Government Departments: Procurement

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what steps his Department takes to ensure that Government suppliers have *(a)* appropriate resilience arrangements and *(b)* business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements which are fit for purpose or compliant with BS 25999. [29338]

Mr Maude: The Cabinet Office provides model contractual documentation which is recommended for use by central Government Departments in ICT enabled services contracts. This includes a set of obligations which describe a Department's requirements for ensuring continuity of the business processes and operations in circumstances of service disruption or failure and, for restoring the services through business continuity and as necessary disaster recovery procedures.

It also includes the requirement on the contractor to develop and maintain a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan which is designed to ensure that the arrangements are compliant with the relevant provisions of ISO/IEC17799:2000, BS15000 (or equivalent) and other relevant industry standards that apply.

In all procurements subject to the Gateway review process Departments are required to ensure that they and their suppliers have adequate plans in place to deal with risks.

Immigration

Steve McCabe: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what estimate he has made of the number of immigrants to the UK in *(a)* 2010, *(b)* 2011, *(c)* 2012, *(d)* 2013, *(e)* 2014 and *(f)* 2015. [29874]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of immigrants to the UK in (a) 2010, (b) 2011, (c) 2012, (d) 2013, (e) 2014 and (f) 2015. (29874)

The most recent population projections of the UK are based on the mid-year population estimates for 2008. Assumptions of future migration are made to produce population projections. The assumed net migration, given in the table below, is used in the production of the projections. The assumptions for in-migration and out-migration are by-products of this process and do not feed directly into producing projections. Long-term international migration data produced by the ONS applies the UN definition of someone who moves from their country of previous residence for a period of at least a year, irrespective of citizenship.

Note the data presented are mid-year to mid-year and are not available by calendar year.

2008-based National Population Projections—assumed annual migration, UK

	2009-10	*2010-11*	*2011-12*	*2012-13*	*2013-14*	*2014-15*[1]
In-migration	670,800	670,800	670,800	670,800	670,800	670,000
Out-migration	465,000	470,000	475,000	480,000	485,000	490,000
Net migration	205,800	200,800	195,800	190,800	185,800	180,000

[1] The projections assume constant levels of annual net migration beyond 2014-15.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

National population projections are available from the Office for National Statistics website at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=8519

The national population projections are not forecasts and do not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors (whether in the UK or overseas) might have on demographic behaviour. They simply provide the population levels and age structure that would result if the underlying assumptions about future fertility, mortality and migration were to be realised.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan: Armed Forces and Police

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the extent of the readiness of the Afghan National Security Forces to take control of the country's security in 2015. [30611]

Nick Harvey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 2 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 986W, to the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire (Mr Murphy).

Air Force: Scotland

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on redevelopment work at each Royal Air Force base in Scotland in each of the last 10 years; and what estimate he has made of his Department's likely expenditure on such work in each of the next five years. [30854][1]

Nick Harvey: The expenditure on redevelopment (defined as capital expenditure and minor new works) for the major RAF stations in the UK since financial year 2006-07 is shown in the following table:

Expenditure by station

£ million

	2006-07	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
RAF Kinloss	5.3	3.9	1.9	1.8
RAF Leuchars	4.7	4.3	5.6	9.4
RAF Lossiemouth	5.6	1.8	4.5	6.1

Information prior to the financial year 2005-06 is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Some of the expenditure has been split between individual financial years on an estimated basis.

The Ministry of Defence is in the process of completing its annual planning round which will allocate future programme budgets. This is expected to conclude in early 2011.

Armed Forces: Conditions of Employment

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to renew the Military Covenant. [30608]

Mr Robathan: The independent taskforce report led by Professor Hew Strachan was published on 8 December 2010. A copy can be found in the Library of the House and we intend to take forward two recommendations immediately in advance of the Government's full response, relating to an Armed Forces Community Covenant, and a Chief of the Defence Staff Commendation scheme.

The first reading of the Armed Forces Bill took place on 8 December 2010. Once this achieves Royal Assent my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence will be required to prepare an Armed Forces Covenant Report annually and lay it before Parliament.

Armed Forces: Housing

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to increase the standard of service accommodation; and if he will make a statement. [30609]

Peter Luff: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Minister responsible for defence personnel welfare and veterans, the Under-Secretary of State for Defence, the right hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr Robathan), on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 656, to the hon. Member for Wansbeck (Ian Lavery).

Armed Forces: Investigations

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what investigation his Department conducted into the incident on (1) 30 September 2009 in Helmand province, in which a platoon from B Company, 4th Battalion The Rifles, called in an air strike; when the investigation was conducted; which part of his Department conducted the investigation; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the report of the investigation; [20793]

(2) 28 May 2009 in Helmand province, in which a patrol from A Company, 2nd Battalion The Rifles, reportedly shot at a car; when the investigation was conducted; which part of his Department conducted the investigation; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the report of the investigation; [20794]

(3) 19 May 2009 in Helmand province, in which Gurkhas mentoring a police unit reportedly called in a Harrier air strike after an ambush; when the investigation was conducted; which part of his Department conducted the investigation; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the report of the investigation; [20795]

(4) 22 October 2008 in Helmand province, in which a soldier in a British squad mentoring the Afghan army reportedly killed a motorcyclist; when the investigation was conducted; which part of his Department conducted the investigation; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the report of the investigation. [20796]

Dr Fox *[holding answer 27 October 2010]*: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 3 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 847-50W. A copy of my letter to him will be published in the *Official Report*.

Armed Forces: National Insurance Contributions

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what advice is provided to armed forces personnel on paying the full stamp rate for their national insurance contributions. [30644]

Mr Robathan: Members of the armed forces are subject to UK income tax and national insurance contributions on their government salaries wherever they are serving. Briefings relating to national insurance contributions mainly occur during recruit training where trainees are given a full explanation of their pay and what type of compulsory deductions are made. We do not advise explicitly on the impact of not paying contributions throughout a working life, as in the majority of cases this will occur beyond their employment in the armed forces. However, information is available during the resettlement process for those considering self-employment and the financial considerations required.

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[1] *[Official Report, 18 January 2011, Vol. 521, c. 8MC.]*

Service personnel about to embark on unpaid leave and/or maternity leave are advised to contact their local Department for Work and Pensions office to determine how national insurance contributions can continue.

Armed Forces: Pensions

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* charities and *(b)* representatives of armed forces' families on the likely effects on them of changes to pensions and benefits proposed in the comprehensive spending review; and if he will make a statement. [30605]

Mr Robathan: I have had meetings with several organisations and have discussed this along with other pension-related issues. We also remain in regular written contact with the Forces Pension Society and I have invited them to meet me.

Armed Forces: Training

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence by what means he plans to make efficiencies in military training, under his proposals in the Strategic Defence and Security Review. [30610]

Nick Harvey: We will enhance the training environment and use the most effective method of preparing our armed forces for the tasks we ask them to do. This will mean that some outdated training methods will be replaced by greater use of simulated training and modern training techniques.

One specific area of work that we will be focusing on is the Defence Technical Training Change Programme (DTTCP) which, following the termination of the Defence Training Rationalisation (DTR) PFI Procurement on 19 October 2010, is a new programme that has been established to build upon the work already started under DTR. DTTCP aims to deliver efficiencies through estate rationalisation and improvements in the delivery of technical training across all three services.

Army: Training

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the role of the Army's Hybrid Foundation Training. [30599]

Peter Luff: Hybrid Foundation Training (HFT) provides the essential steps for a unit's progression on to Mission Specific Training (MST), which trains Force Elements for a named operation or specific contingency. HFT focuses individuals and units on core soldiering skills (fire and manoeuvre, all arms integration, leadership and team building), which they can build on and adapt to suit the requirements of MST. The skills obtained during HFT are vital to allow units and individuals to gain the maximum benefit from MST training and ensure that they are delivered to the start of MST with the agility and flexibility required for the current operating environment.

HFT is constantly updated using the relevant lessons learned from operations and training.

Crimes of Violence Against Women

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the International Violence Against Women Champion will exercise ministerial responsibilities in his Department. [28521]

Mr Robathan: I refer the right hon. and learned Member to the answer the Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, my hon. Friend the Member for Taunton Deane (Mr Browne) gave her on 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 155W.

Defence: Industry

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with representatives of the UK defence industry for the purpose of informing his Department's forthcoming Green Paper. [30601]

Peter Luff: Following the publication of the Strategic Defence and Security Review, I held a conference on 2 November 2010 to start the process of engaging with industry on the planned Green Paper on Equipment, Support and Technology for UK Defence and Security. I chaired a meeting of the National Defence Industries Council on 22 November 2010 where the Green Paper was discussed and attended the Defence Acquisition Workshop 2010 at Shrivenham on 24 to 25 November 2010, which included discussion of a number of Green Paper themes. I have also addressed a number of other industry audiences and held a number of meetings with individual suppliers, in London and elsewhere, including small and medium sized companies.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30748]

Peter Luff: The total number of invoices paid by the Ministry of Defence in the 12 months December 2009 to November 2010 was 4,697,676.

The figures provided represent invoices processed by the MOD Financial Management Shared Service Centre and the four MOD trading funds:

Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL)

Meteorological Office

Defence Support Group (DSG)

UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO).

Departmental Contracts

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department plans to take to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises and third sector organisations to compete for departmental contracts in line with value-for-money policy, UK regulations and EU procurement directives. [28115]

Peter Luff: In the defence and security sectors, small and medium-sized enterprises are often an important source of research and innovation, as well as offering adaptability and flexibility. The forthcoming Green Paper on Equipment, Support and Technology for UK Defence and Security will consider on how the Government can best encourage and enable SMEs to participate more fully in these sectors.

Departmental Film

Mr Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on the production of *(a)* films of speeches for use at events and *(b)* other films since May 2010. [31138]

Peter Luff: Photographers are employed by the Department for a range of purposes, including capturing and editing videos. The costs associated with producing video records of speeches are not identified separately across the Department.

Videos are made by the Ministry of Defence for internal training and information purposes. Additionally the armed forces commission films for recruiting campaigns for use across a range of external media channels, including TV, cinema and online.

Since May 2010 the Department has spent around £850,000 producing such films, the majority of which are for recruiting and training purposes. The costs broken down by services are shown in the following table:

	£
Royal Navy	670,000
British Army	133,000
Royal Air Force	45,000

Departmental Internet

Mr Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on its website since May 2010. [31137]

Peter Luff: The Ministry of Defence website is an important channel for communicating with the wider defence community, the general public and the worldwide internet audience. It provides a platform for the MOD to respond rapidly to current issues as well as providing an authoritative source of enduring information about defence and the armed forces.

From 1 May to 30 November 2010 the MOD spent £206,803.24 on the www.mod.uk website; where applicable, these figures include VAT. Spending falls under the following categories defined by the Cabinet Office:

Strategy and planning

Design and build

Hosting and infrastructure

Testing and evaluation.

Departmental Manpower

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff were employed by his Department in each month since April 2010. [31293]

Mr Robathan: The following table shows the total strength of the Ministry of Defence[1] by month from April 2010 to November 2010.

[1] Totals listed are headcount and have been rounded to the nearest 10.

	Headcount
April 2010	89,970
May 2010	89,770
June 2010	89,500
July 2010	89,300
August 2010	88,970
September 2010	88,570
October 2010	88,130
November 2010	87,940

Source:
DASA (Quad Service)

There has been a freeze on external recruitment since May 2010, other than for business-critical posts, such as those in direct support of operations, apprenticeships, fast stream and specialist graduates and posts paid for in full by other parties (for example United States Visiting Forces and NATO Support Facilities).

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the change in staff numbers in his Department has been since 1 May 2010. [31295]

Peter Luff: Between May and November 2010, there was a reduction of 1,830 in the staff headcount in the Ministry of Defence.

Departmental Photography

Mr Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on photography since 1 May 2010. [31139]

Peter Luff: The Ministry of Defence's expenditure on photography is incurred in a number of ways, including:

Manpower costs, including travel and subsistence, for photographers employed by the MOD and the armed forces.

Photographic equipment and software costs, including purchase and maintenance.

Costs incurred by individual military units and establishments.

Forensic and technical photography costs.

Training for photographers and photo editors.

Costs relating to the deployment of military and civilian photographers on Operations.

Costs are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each of the last 10 years. [28385]

Peter Luff: The information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ex-servicemen: Radiation Exposure

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in respect of which leukaemias nuclear test veterans are eligible for war pensions. [30643]

Peter Luff: Awards under the war pension scheme can be made for any leukaemia (other than chronic lymphatic leukaemia) and primary polycythaemia rubra vera with clinical onset within 25 years of visiting the sites, based on presence only at the tests (i.e. exposure to service-related ionising radiation does not need to be shown).

Military Aircraft

Dr Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reason the use of fixed-wing aircraft on operations in Afghanistan for up to five years was deemed to be the overriding factor determining the future of fixed-wing naval capability for at least the next 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [30069]

Peter Luff: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 24 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 317-19W, to the hon. Members for New Forest East (Dr Lewis) and for Portsmouth North (Penny Mordaunt).

Dr Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Typhoon is *(a)* currently or *(b)* scheduled in future to be capable of ground attack operations in Afghanistan; which aircraft will be used for ground attack operations in any theatre after the withdrawal of the Tornados from 2021; and if he will make a statement. [30070]

Nick Harvey: The majority of Typhoons and all Tornado GR4s have a precision guided ground attack capability. Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) will have this capability as it enters service. Therefore post-2021 both JSF and Typhoon will be capable of ground attack operations. Ground attack support in Afghanistan is currently provided by the Tornado GR4 which will continue to provide support for the foreseeable future.

Dr Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many *(a)* Fleet Air Arm and *(b)* Royal Air Force Harrier pilots will be required to leave the armed forces as a result of the withdrawal of the Harriers; how many Harrier pilots there were in each of the two services prior to the withdrawal of the Harriers; and what arrangements will be made for pensions for those made redundant as a consequence of that withdrawal; [30071]

(2) how soon after the withdrawal of the Harriers redundant Harrier pilots will be required to leave their services; whether they will be entitled to full retraining packages before leaving; and if he will make a statement. [30072]

Mr Robathan: There are currently 135 Royal Air Force and 53 Royal Navy pilots who are qualified to fly Harrier aircraft, which are due to be withdrawn from service at the end of December 2010. The number of RAF Harrier pilots who will be required to leave the Service as a result of the withdrawal of that aircraft is the focus of detailed analysis regarding the wider issue of implementing the strategic defence and security review's outcomes including manning and supporting the front-line. The number of Fleet Air Arm Harrier pilots that will be required to leave the Royal Navy is subject to ongoing work between the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force to determine how best to meet the requirement to re-generate a Carrier Strike capability in 2020.

Royal Navy Harrier pilots would not be required to leave the Naval Service before July 2012 unless they apply to leave earlier. Any pilot made redundant will receive the same standard retraining package offered to any service personnel made redundant and will qualify for graduated resettlement training. In addition, any service personnel made redundant will receive compensation in the form of a lump sum in addition to normal entitlements to pensions and retirement benefits.

Military Bases

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department has engaged independent advisers in respect of its base review. [30685]

Nick Harvey: The Ministry of Defence is now addressing the full range of issues affecting the defence estate following the Strategic Defence and Security Review. This work is being carried out by MOD civilian and service personnel across the Department under their normal responsibilities as part of the MOD's annual planning round. There are no independent advisers. We are listening to representations made by interested parties as well as consulting with other Government Departments, the devolved Administrations and local communities as appropriate.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many staff of his Department in each post at each grade are working on its base review; [30689]

(2) what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of his Department's base review. [30850]

Nick Harvey: The work to address the range of issues affecting the Defence Estate following the Strategic Defence and Security Review is being carried out by MOD civilian and service personnel across the Department. It is being undertaken under their normal responsibilities as part of the MOD's annual planning round. This means it is not possible to give a breakdown of the individual posts involved in the work, and that there are no additional costs to the public purse.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what criteria are used to determine whether to close a military base. [30851]

Nick Harvey: The Ministry of Defence keeps its estate under continual review to ensure that it is of the right size and in the right locations to support current and future defence capability. Military sites are declared surplus when no continuing defence use can be ascertained for them.

However a site belonging to one service may close and then be re-used for another defence purpose, as happened, for instance, when RAF Innsworth near Gloucester became Imjin Barracks.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the decommissioning and clean-up costs consequent on the closure of the RAF bases currently under consideration for closure. [30856]

Nick Harvey: None. We are examining the potential future defence uses for those sites which, as a result of decisions taken during the Strategic Defence and Security Review, are no longer required by the RAF. As no decisions have been taken which will necessarily result in the closure of an RAF base, the costs of remediation in preparation for disposal are not being examined at this stage.

Rescue Services

Dr Whiteford: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times search and rescue helicopters based at RAF Lossiemouth have been involved in operations involving fishing vessels in each of the last five years. [31145]

Nick Harvey: The information requested is shown in the following table.

	RAF Lossiemouth call-outs to fishing vessels
2005	1
2006	12
2007	10
2008	11
2009	3
2010	5

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts: Finance

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 19 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 968W, on arts: finance (1) whether he raised with ministerial colleagues the likely effects on arts and culture funding of the abolition of regional development agencies before the announcement of the outcomes of the comprehensive spending review; [31298]

(2) whether he raised with ministerial colleagues the effects on arts and culture funding of reductions to local authority grants prior to the announcement of the outcomes of the comprehensive spending review. [31299]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: I regularly meet ministerial colleagues to discuss cross-departmental issues.

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how much funding he plans to provide for his matched funding arrangements to stimulate philanthropic funding of arts organisations. [31301]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: Of the £80 million already designated for the philanthropy match funding programme, £30 million will come from this Department, and £50 million from Arts Council England's national lottery funds.

Charitable Donations

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how much of the funding to be provided for the match-funding arrangements to stimulate philanthropy he expects *(a)* his Department and *(b)* National Lottery funds to contribute. [30924]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: Of the £80 million already designated for the philanthropy match funding programme, £30 million will come from my Department, and £50 million from Arts Council England's national lottery funds.

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport which Department has lead responsibility for the review of Government support for philanthropy announced on 8 December 2010. [30926]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: The Cabinet Office has lead responsibility for philanthropy across Government. The review will be supported by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Her Majesty's Treasury and other Departments as appropriate.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30747]

John Penrose: The total number of invoices processed by the Department in the 12 months to November 2010 was 5,669.

Departmental Co-ordination

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport on what dates his regular meetings with the Secretary of State for Education, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills to discuss cross-departmental issues have taken place since May 2010. [31297]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: I met the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on 14 July and on 17 November 2010; the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 15 July and 11 November 2010; and the Secretary of State for Education on 8 June, 14 July, 22 September and 25 November 2010, to discuss cross-departmental issues.

Departmental Manpower

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many *(a)* temporary and *(b)* agency staff his Department has employed since 24 May 2010; and at what (i) grade and (ii) total cost to his Department. [30229]

John Penrose: The table sets out the number of temporary and agency staff the Department has employed since 24 May 2010 and their total costs at each grade up to end October 2010.

DCMS grade	*Civil service equivalent grade*	*Number of temporary and agency staff*	*Cost to the Department inclusive of VAT £*
C	Executive officer (EO)	3	6,550
A	Grade 7	1	29,536

Departmental Public Expenditure

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what estimate he has made of the proportion of the reduction in his Department's budget that will be achieved through efficiency savings over the period of the comprehensive spending review. [30303]

John Penrose: No direct estimate of the proportion attributable to efficiency savings has been made; however, the majority of the reduction to the Department's budget will be delivered through a combination of efficiency savings and ending lower priority work.

Hat Factory: Finance

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport if he will undertake an economic impact assessment in respect of proposed reductions in funding to the Hat Factory arts venue in Luton; and if he will make a statement. [30863]

Mr Vaizey: There are no plans for the Department to conduct economic impact assessments into funding decisions for individual arts venues made by other organisations. In most cases, public funding for these venues comes through local authorities and through Arts Council England, operating at arm's length from government.

Listed Buildings: Double Glazing

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport if he will assess the merits of relaxing restrictions on replacing single glazing in listed buildings with slim double or triple-glazed panes. [30821]

John Penrose: English Heritage is responsible for assessing and advising the Department on this matter.

Accordingly, I have asked the chief executive of English Heritage to write direct to the hon. Member.

Copies of the reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Museums

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how much funding he plans to make available to the *(a)* museum development work, *(b)* library development work and *(c)* statutory property functions of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council from 2012-13 to 2014-15. [31289]

Mr Vaizey: The total funding that will be made available to Arts Council England for museum development work, library development work and statutory cultural property functions will be £46.56 million in 2012-13; £45.99 million in 2013-14 and £45.96 million in 2014-15. It will be up to Arts Council England to determine how to allocate this funding, though cuts to the Renaissance in the Regions programme will be limited to 15%.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what steps he plans to take to meet the responsibilities of archives after the ending of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council; and whether such responsibilities are to be transferred to another body. [31404]

Mr Vaizey: The future of archives work currently undertaken by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council is still being considered. We expect to be able to make an announcement shortly.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what funding *(a)* was allocated to the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) in 2010-11 and *(b)* will be so allocated in 2011-12; and whether such funding will be allocated to Arts Council England should the MLA's functions be transferred to that body prior to March 2012. [31405]

Mr Vaizey: The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) received £60.71 million in 2010-11, including core, Renaissance and strategic commissioning funding. The MLA has received an indicative allocation of £51.97 million in 2011-12 for core and Renaissance funding. It is expected that funding will be transferred to Arts Council England at the appropriate time during 2011-12 once a transition timetable has been agreed.

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport whether museums which do not have national status and are unable to secure sponsorship other than from central Government will continue to receive funding from the public purse. [30921]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: As with every other arm's length body, the non-national museums have been allocated funding until 2014-15, which will be transferred with them to any new sponsors. If no new sponsorship arrangements can be found for the non-national museums, this Department will consider the needs of these museums along with its other sponsored bodies in the next spending review period.

Museums: Closures

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many museums have closed in *(a)* England and *(b)* Sussex in each year since 2005. [30477]

Mr Vaizey: Since the start of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council Renaissance programme in 2002, none of the Regional Hub Museum Services has closed. Information on closures of independent, local authority or charitably funded museums is not held centrally.

Olympic Delivery Authority: VAT

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what his most recent estimate is of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on the budget of the Olympic Delivery Authority. [31150]

Hugh Robertson: The increase in value added tax of 2.5% from 4 January 2011 has a forecast impact of £45.6 million over the life of the programme. This cost has been provided for in the 2010 spending review settlement. Savings elsewhere in the Olympic budget mean that the overall cost remains within the £9.3 billion public sector funding package.

Public Libraries

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how he plans to meet his statutory duty to oversee and promote the public library service after the end of *(a)* the Advisory Council on Libraries and *(b)* the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. [31407]

Mr Vaizey: Officials will work with relevant bodies to ensure appropriate intelligence about the library sector is captured, and that mechanisms are in place to communicate it to this Department. Officials can then advise the Secretary of State on the use of his statutory powers in the absence of the Advisory Council on Libraries and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

Sports: Birmingham

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what steps he is taking to increase adult participation in sport in Birmingham before the London 2012 Olympics. [31120]

Hugh Robertson: Sport England is the arm's length body with responsibility for community sport. Its aim is to increase and sustain levels of participation in sport and develop talent to drive standards of elite performance throughout the country.

National governing bodies of sport (NGBs) are responsible for the strategy, delivering through their networks of community clubs, coaches and volunteers. Sport England is investing £480 million through 46 governing bodies over the next four years and has agreed 'grow', 'sustain' and 'excel' targets with each one. Each sport has developed a whole sport plan to achieve these targets. Since 2006, Sport England has invested a total of £3,780,824 in the Birmingham Ladywood constituency.

Additionally, the £135 million Mass Participation Olympic Legacy—Places People Play—was launched in November and is available to residents of Birmingham. This programme will be funded by lottery money and has been developed in partnership with Sport England, the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), the British Olympic Association (BOA) and the British Paralympic Association (BPA).

Welsh Language Schemes

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport when his Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses such schemes can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31155]

John Penrose: The Department published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act in June 2007.

The scheme can be accessed in Welsh and English at:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/

plus

http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/3602.aspx

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/

plus

http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/3602.aspx

Youth Sports: Finance

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 19 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 971W, on youth sports: finance, whether he raised with ministerial colleagues the issue of funding for school sports partnerships before the announcement of the outcomes of the comprehensive spending review. [31300]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: I regularly meet ministerial colleagues to discuss cross-departmental issues.

TREASURY

Addison Lee

Katy Clark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies contract services from Addison Lee private hire taxi company. [30848]

Mr Gauke: HM Treasury, the Debt Management Office and the Asset Protection Agency have a contract with Addison Lee for the provision of taxi and courier services.

The Royal Mint Advisory Committee does not contract services from Addison Lee.

Air Passenger Duty

Mr Dodds: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of the likely effects on regional airports of increases in air passenger duty; [30879]

(2) what proportion of air passenger duty revenues was raised from flights originating in Northern Ireland in each year since the introduction of the duty; [30880]

(3) what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on air passenger duty and its effects on Northern Ireland. [30881]

Mr Gauke: The existing rates of air passenger duty (APD) were set and legislated for by the previous Government. An impact assessment was published at

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ria/apd-reform-ia.pdf

Data are not available on APD paid by origin of passengers or flights. HMRC only collects data on APD-chargeable passengers, split into the four destination bands.

The June Budget announced that the Government will explore changes to the aviation tax system. Major changes will be subject to consultation.

Banknotes: Costs

Mr Knight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost to the public purse of printing bank-notes was in the last three years for which figures are available. [30873]

Mr Hoban: This information is publicly available in the Bank of England's Annual Report and Accounts:

http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/annualreport/index.htm

Bureaux de Change: Regulation

Naomi Long: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has for the regulation of currency exchange services. [30658]

Mr Hoban: Retail currency exchange is subject to the Price Indications (Bureaux de Change) (No 2) Regulations 1992, and the Money Laundering Regulations 2007.

The Government keeps the extent of the regulation of currency exchange under review.

Cheques

Grahame M. Morris: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received on the use of cheques issued by UK banks as a method of payment; and if he will make a statement. [31203]

Dr Wollaston: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what arrangements he plans to put in place to mitigate the adverse effects on small businesses and individuals arising from the phasing out of cheques; [31049]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with the UK Payments Council on alternative methods of payment to replace cheques. [31050]

Mr Hoban: I have written to every Member of the House to set out the Government's position on cheques.

Treasury Ministers and officials have discussions with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such discussions.

Child Benefit: Belfast

Naomi Long: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of households which will be affected by the removal of child benefit from higher-rate tax payers in Belfast East constituency; and how many of those households are single parent households. [30660]

Mr Gauke: Information on household income and composition for child benefit claimants is not available at parliamentary constituency level.

Child Care Tax Credit

Miss Begg: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the average weekly change in entitlement to *(a)* families with one child and *(b)* families with two or more children as a result of the announced changes to the child care element of working tax credits. [30648]

Mr Gauke: The change in support from the child care element to cover 70% of costs is estimated to reduce the entitlement of families with one child by £8.50 a week, and for families with two or more children by £10.50 a week.

Departmental Grants

Anas Sarwar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what grants have been awarded by his Department in 2010-11 to date; what grants he plans to award in each of the next two years; what the monetary value is of each such grant; and to which organisations such grants are to be made; [26581]

(2) what the monetary value was of grants awarded by his Department in 2009-10; and how much he plans to award in such grants in *(a)* 2010-11 and *(b)* 2011-12. [26583]

Justine Greening *[holding answer 25 November 2010]*: The Treasury did not award any grants in 2009-10 and has no plans to do so in 2010-11. On the Department's current plans, a single grant of £1,750,000 is to be awarded in 2011-12 and 2012-13 to the Office for Budget Responsibility.

Disability Living Allowance: Care Homes

Margaret Curran: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reasons his Department has revised its estimate of the savings arising from the removal of the mobility component of disability living allowance for claimants in residential care from £135 million to £160 million in 2014-15. [29067]

Maria Miller: I have been asked to reply.

The savings arising from this measure have been updated in line with additional information on the status of care home residents who entered residential care before 1998. Prior to this date there was no procedural requirement to record entry or exit dates into residential care. Additional estimates have been produced to ensure increased accuracy.

EU Budget

Jim Shannon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the net financial cost to the public purse was of the UK's membership of the EU in each of the last five years. [30566]

Mr Gauke: The UK's net contributions to the EU Budget over the period 2005-06 to 2009-10 were:

	£ billion
2005-06	4.4
2006-07	3.5
2007-08	4.2
2008-09	3.0
2009-10	4.7

Financial Services: Regulation

Naomi Long: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what benefits he expects to accrue to *(a)* small payments institutions and *(b)* their customers as a result of registration of such institutions within the Financial Services Authority. [30659]

Mr Hoban: The registration of small payments institutions is a requirement of the payment services directive. Registration is a proportionate way to identify and monitor all persons providing remittance services without imposing undue costs on small businesses.

The benefits to customers of registration are that firms will have to provide them with information in advance, before they commit to using their services, for example on costs and charges, cancellation rights and other essential information.

Gift Aid

Jim Shannon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the level of Gift Aid repayments made to charities in each region in each of the last five years. [30563]

Mr Gauke: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not separately identify Gift Aid claims by regions of the UK.

Amounts of tax repaid to charities in the UK on donations under Gift Aid are published in Table 10.1 on the HMRC website at:

www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/charities/menu.htm

In 2009-10 a total of £1,007 million[1] was repaid to UK charities under Gift Aid.

[1] Provisional.

Inheritance Tax

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had on the threshold at which inheritance tax is charged. [31003]

Mr Gauke: The Budget in June 2010 confirmed that the inheritance tax threshold will be frozen at £325,000 until 2014-15. As set out in the coalition agreement, the Government have decided that making changes to the personal allowances for income tax should take priority over other tax cuts including cuts to inheritance tax. Any changes to the inheritance tax regime will then have to be considered with due regard to the Government's priorities of reducing the fiscal deficit and ensuring economic recovery. Any decision would be made through the usual Budget process.

Taxation: Personal Savings

Mr Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what his latest estimate is of the cost to the Exchequer of reducing the starting rate of income tax on savings income to 0 per cent. in the first 12 months following implementation; and if he will make a statement; [30674]

(2) what his latest estimate is of the cost to the Exchequer of increasing the starting rate limit for savings income to £5,000 in the 12 months following implementation. [30675]

Mr Gauke: It is estimated that income tax liabilities due in 2011-12 would fall by £120 million if the starting rate of tax for savings income were reduced to 0% and by £100 million if the starting rate limit for savings income were increased to £5,000.

These estimates are, however, illustrative and do not take into account behavioural effects. Actual Exchequer impacts are likely to be smaller due to the deduction at source of tax on savings income at the basic rate of tax, and would depend on how taxpayers with savings income in the starting rate band respond to the changes.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Energy Prices

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change when he last met representatives of *(a)* Ofgem and *(b)* energy suppliers to discuss consumer energy prices. [30975]

Chris Huhne: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for York Central (Hugh Bayley) and the hon. Member for Stockton North (Alex Cunningham) earlier today.

Gas Security

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent assessment he has made of the security of gas supplies in winter months. [30978]

Chris Huhne: National Grid's Winter Outlook forecasts demand for winter 2010-11 will be 0.5% higher than weather corrected actual demands in 2009-10. Gas supplies are forecasted to be higher than last year's forecast, and there is further potential for even higher levels of supply from Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) and imports over the interconnector.

The Government place highest emphasis on security by supporting a highly liquid and open market where gas is obtained from a diverse range of sources.

Carbon Emissions

David T. C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what research on the reduction of the level of the UK's carbon dioxide emissions comparing the costs and benefits of different means of generation and conservation of energy his Department has taken into account in reaching policy decisions on such matters. [29787]

Gregory Barker: Cost effectiveness is one of a number of important criteria Government must take into account when considering policy options—both in the short-term and long-term—and across the economy.

An economic appraisal of the costs and benefits of an intervention is a mandatory part of impact assessments for all policies, and allows consideration of the relative merits of different policy options. This must be carried out in line with HM Treasury's Green Book and the supplementary guidance on the valuation of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions for appraisal and evaluation where policies have a significant impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

Considerations of the long-term pathway to the UK's target to reduce emissions by at least 80% on 1990 levels by 2050 is also part of the evidence base to inform decision making—and analysis from economy wide long-term pathway least-cost optimisation models has been commissioned in the past (ie for the Low Carbon Transition Plan, Climate Change Act impact assessment, and Energy White Papers) and will be drawn on in future, to gain insight into the key long-term considerations.

Across the package of policies and measures put in place to deliver the savings required to meet the UK's carbon budgets there is a wide range of cost-effectiveness: Conservation and energy efficiency measures typically represent more cost-effective options in the near term, while decarbonising the power generation sector is key to placing the UK on track with its long-term target—and to do so at least-cost, avoiding locking in to costlier alternatives.

Evidence on the net costs and cost effectiveness of the economy wide package of policies and measures to deliver the first three carbon budgets was published in the Analytical Annex to the Low Carbon Transition Plan (DECC, July 2009). Since then various individual impact assessments have been produced, for example to support the Energy Bill, and an impact assessment on the Electricity Market Reform will be published alongside the consultation document. The Government will produce its report on delivering the Fourth Carbon Budget by October 2011.

References:

Valuation of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions for appraisal and evaluation

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/analysts_group/analysts_group.aspx

Low Carbon Transition Plan 2009

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/lc_uk/lc_trans_plan/lc_trans_plan.aspx

Energy White Paper 2007

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/legislation/white_papers/white_paper_07/white_paper_07.aspx

Individual impact assessments available on the BRE online library

http://www.ialibrary.berr.gov.uk/links/

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps he has taken since his appointment to reduce expenditure on conferences from budgets within his responsibility. [28354]

Gregory Barker: The nature of the Department's work means that there is some need for Ministers and staff to attend conferences. However, a new travel and subsistence policy has been introduced with effect from October 2010 under which:

Staff should only travel if it is absolutely necessary

Subsistence claims will be based on actual costs

All travel bookings must be made though the official suppliers

Standard or economy class must be used unless there is a clear business need for a higher class to be approved

All claims will need to be approved regardless of grade.

Electricity

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will publish his projections for electricity to be fed from each source into the grid in *(a)* 2010, *(b)* 2011, *(c)* 2012, *(d)* 2013 and *(e)* 2014. [30435]

Charles Hendry: The Feed-in Tariffs (FITs) scheme for Great Britain was launched in April 2010. The scheme covers sub-5 MW wind, hydro, solar PV, anaerobic digestion and domestic scale micro-CHP installations. DECC published an impact assessment in February 2010 setting out projections for TWh generation levels, for further details, see:

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/consultations/elec_financial/elec_financial.aspx

Internal analysis by DECC, consistent with the 'chosen option' in the impact assessment, shows that over the period 2010 to 2014, over 80% of projected electricity generation under the FITs scheme is expected to be exported back to the grid. The following table sets out these estimates in greater detail.

Projected electricity generation under FITs (inclusive of business-as-usual)[1]

	Financial years				
	2010	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*
Total GWh	259	603	1,113	1,665	2,342
Percentage exported back to grid	87	84	82	80	80
GWh exported back to grid	227	507	907	1,334	1,865

[1] Where business-as-usual represents sub-5 MW generation that would have occurred in the absence of FITs under the renewables obligation.

In addition, there will be other electricity generation connected to the distribution networks that is not supported under the Feed-in Tariff.

Energy Supply

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will hold discussions with representatives of household consumer gas and oil companies on the recent rise in prices of such fuels to domestic customers; and if he will make a statement. [31410]

Charles Hendry: The Office of Fair Trading and the Competition Commission are responsible for enforcement of competition and consumer law which applies to the sale of heating oil and liquid petroleum gas.

If consumers have reason to believe that the price for heating oil or LPG indicates anti-competitive behaviour by suppliers, evidence about this behaviour should be sent to the OFT.

Energy: Housing

Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps he plans to take to ensure that fuel expenditure in vulnerable households using the Pay As You Save scheme will be reduced sufficiently to raise each household out of fuel poverty. [31383]

Gregory Barker: The Green Deal will provide the opportunity for householders to take action to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, and protect themselves against price rises through greater energy saving.

A new Energy Company Obligation (ECO), which will take over from the current Carbon Emissions Reduction Target and Community Energy Saving Programme when they come to an end, will run in parallel with the Green Deal when introduced in 2012.

Through the ECO, we expect energy companies to play a greater role than under previous obligations in helping ensure that more of the poorest and most vulnerable can afford to heat their homes adequately. Alongside insulation measures, we expect them to be able to offer basic heating systems for those who most need them.

In addition, from April next year, energy suppliers will be required to provide greater help with the financial costs of energy bills to more of the most vulnerable fuel poor households through the Warm Home Discount.

Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps he plans to take to ensure that the energy use in households using the Pay As You Save scheme will generate sufficient savings to repay the loan from his Department. [31384]

Gregory Barker: Green Deal arrangements will be financed by private companies, and not by the Department. A key principle is that payments collected through the Green Deal should not exceed the expected savings, but it is not possible to guarantee this, as both energy price and energy usage can fluctuate over time.

We are reviewing how best to design the assessment at the beginning of the Green Deal to enable the savings estimates to be as accurate as possible, and we are considering what behavioural advice can be given to consumers to ensure they understand how to realise the maximum potential savings.

We are also designing the new Energy Company Obligation to ensure that further support is available for those in need of additional help, including low-income vulnerable households and those in hard-to-treat properties.

Energy: Prices

Dr Thérèse Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change whether he has assessed the merits of bringing forward proposals to require energy companies to maintain tariffs offered to consumers for a minimum of six months from the date of contract acceptance. [29934]

Charles Hendry: DECC has not carried out detailed analysis of these proposals. However, as part of its upcoming retail market review, Ofgem will be looking into issues concerning tariff complexity and consumer engagement.

Under existing rules Ofgem already require suppliers to take all reasonable steps to bring the principal terms of a contract to the attention of a customer, before it is agreed, including whether a tariff is variable, fixed or an introductory offer. Consumers are able to take advantage of a range of fixed rate deals offered by suppliers, if they want to ensure that a tariff is maintained for a period of time.

Energy: Tariffs

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will ensure that the proposed Energy Security and Green Economy Bill includes provisions requiring minimum standards for energy tariffs including the removal of tracker tariffs from the market until a standard benchmark for tracking is agreed and the removal of tariffs marketed as having no standing charges but with an increase in the unit rate equivalent to the value of the standing charge; and if he will make a statement. [31401]

Gregory Barker: The Energy Bill does not contain the measures the hon. Member asks about. However, following the publication of their latest quarterly prices report, Ofgem announced a review of the retail energy market to decide if further changes are needed to ensure the market works in the interests of consumers and to increase transparency. Ofgem will report on this review in March of next year. This announcement is available online at:

http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/Media/PressRel/Documents1/Retail%20Market%2026%20November.pdf

In addition, following their 2008 probe into retail energy markets Ofgem introduced standards of conduct that it expects suppliers to take all reasonable steps to adhere to. Included in these standards is an expectation that suppliers should not sell products that are inappropriate to a customer's needs or offer products that are unnecessarily complex or confusing.

Fuel: Poverty

Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the proportion of those in fuel poverty who are eligible for assistance in the priority group for *(a)* phase two of the Energy Efficiency Commitment scheme and *(b)* the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target scheme. [31385]

Gregory Barker: We estimate that in 2006 58% of fuel poor households were eligible for assistance in the priority group as defined in phase two of the Energy Efficiency Commitment. In 2008, according to the most recent fuel poverty statistics available, approximately 77% of fuel poor households were eligible for assistance in the priority group as defined in the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target.

Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the proportion of recipients of assistance in the priority group for *(a)* phase two of the Energy Efficiency Commitment scheme and *(b)* the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target scheme who are fuel poor. [31386]

Gregory Barker: The priority group target ensures that households more likely to experience fuel poverty do receive support. However, we do not have data detailing whether households that received measures under priority group rules during either supplier obligation phase were fuel poor at the point of installation. This summer we introduced a super priority group obligation under the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target to ensure that more of the low income households vulnerable to fuel poverty receive energy efficiency measures.

Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps his Department takes to assess whether a household in England is in fuel poverty; and how many such households there are in *(a)* England, *(b)* London and *(c)* the London borough of Brent. [31387]

Gregory Barker: In England, a household is said to be in fuel poverty if it needs to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain an adequate level of warmth (usually defined as 21 degrees for the main living area, and 18 degrees for other occupied rooms).

In order to determine the required spend on fuel, the annual energy consumption of each household is modelled based on characteristics of the dwelling and the households members. The source of data for this is the English Housing Survey (EHS), an annual survey commissioned by CLG. In addition, the EHS also contains information on the structure of the property, energy efficiency measures, the type of walls and the fuels used.

This modelled consumption is then combined with energy price information in order to calculate the required spend. The information on domestic gas and electricity prices is collected and published by DECC on a quarterly basis via a survey of all major energy suppliers. Information on prices of other fuels come from external sources, including from the Office for National Statistics and the Sutherland tables.

Income information is collected as part of the EHS, via a set of detailed questions. This information includes income from the earnings, benefits and savings for the whole household.

Full details of the methodology employed for calculating fuel poverty statistics can be found in the Fuel Poverty Methodology Handbook at:

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/fuelpov_stats/fuelpov_stats.aspx

The following table shows the number of households in fuel poverty (and the year to which the statistics relate) in England, London and Brent.

Area		*Number of households in fuel poverty*
(a) England	2008	3.3 million
(b) London (Government office region)	2008	328,000
(c) London Borough of Brent	[1]2006	10,300

[1] The latest year for which sub-national fuel poverty statistics are available is 2006.

Nabucco Pipeline Project

Laura Sandys: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent reports he has received on progress on the proposed Nabucco pipeline project; and if he will make a statement. [29599]

Charles Hendry: In its Second Strategic Energy Review of November 2008, the European Commission set out its support for the development of a southern gas corridor. The proposed Nabucco pipeline was specifically designated as a project of strategic importance in the Trans-European Networks—Energy programme.

A number of recent developments have been well-received by the Nabucco consortium. In March 2010, it welcomed the news that the intergovernmental agreement of 13 July 2009, which provides a stable legal framework for gas transit, had been ratified by all signatory countries. In addition, in June 2010, the consortium welcomed the agreement between Turkey and Azerbaijan which defined the terms of gas transit to Turkey and Europe.

We understand that the proposed Nabucco pipeline is currently under consideration by the consortium that owns the Shah Deniz II gas field in Azerbaijan, with a final investment decision expected in 2011.

Nuclear Power Stations

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how much energy UK nuclear power stations produced in the latest period for which figures are available; and what proportion of energy produced in the UK that figure represents. [31330]

Charles Hendry: In 2009, UK nuclear power stations produced 69,098 GWh of electricity. This was 18% of the 375,663 GWh of UK electricity generation in 2009. (In terms of primary energy, nuclear contributed 15,229 thousand tonnes of oil equivalent (ktoe), 9.1% of the UK primary energy production of 166,895 ktoe.)

Oil: Prices

Neil Parish: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps his Department takes to prevent oil companies increasing oil prices during inclement weather. [31197]

Charles Hendry: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave today to my hon. Friend the Member for Tewkesbury (Mr Robertson).

Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000

Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what methodology he uses to calculate the number of households defined as vulnerable for the purposes of the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000. [31112]

Gregory Barker: Vulnerable households are those that contain the elderly (60 or over), children (under 16) or somebody who is long-term sick or disabled.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Broadband

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much of the £530 million allocated from the BBC licence fee for high speed broadband provision by 2015 has been allocated for expenditure in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Wales. [30826]

Mr Vaizey *[holding answer 15 December 2010]:* No specific amounts have been made to England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland out of the £530 million allocated in spending review to support broadband rollout.

The approach being taken to the support of broadband rollout is to support specific projects rather than to make allocations to nations or regions. Four pilot projects were announced on 20 October for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Herefordshire. Final allocations to these projects will await the outcome of open procurement processes but it is expected that £5 million to £10 million will be spent on each project.

The Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport, my right hon. Friend the Member for South West Surrey (Mr Hunt), announced on 6 December 2010 that bids would be invited for a further wave of projects in April 2011, with £50 million of the £530 million being available for that wave.

Company Liquidations: Greater London

Nick de Bois: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many *(a)* compulsory and *(b)* creditor voluntary liquidations were commenced in (i) Greater London and (ii) the London borough of Enfield in each of the last five years. [30478]

Mr Davey: Official statistics covering corporate insolvencies for England and Wales are not currently available at sub-national level.

Annual totals for both compulsory and creditors' voluntary liquidations in England and Wales are presented in Table 1 of the Quarterly Insolvency Statistics, the latest publication of which can be found on the Insolvency Service website:

http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/otherinformation/statistics/201011/table1.pdf

Annual figures for 2010 will be available in the next release of the Insolvency Statistics on 4 February 2011.

Directors: Disqualification

Mr Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many *(a)* directors and *(b)* chief executives have been (i) imprisoned and (ii) disqualified from office for offences related to the discharge of their functions in each of the last 10 years; and for what offences. [29096]

Mr Davey *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* The Department's records relating to prosecutions record outcomes according to offences prosecuted and do not specifically identify either company directors or chief executives. The Department prosecutes a range of offences, primarily under the Insolvency Act 1986, the Companies Acts 1985 and 2006, and the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986. Many of the criminal offences created by the Companies Act 2006 are committed by "an officer of the company" and will therefore apply to directors, managers and secretaries. Consequently, it is not possible to indicate the numbers of directors or chief executives imprisoned or disqualified for offences relating to the discharge of their functions.

The offence relating to the re-use of a company name following insolvent liquidation created by section 216 of the Insolvency Act 1986 is aimed solely at directors or shadow directors. Relevant figures are in the following tables:

Financial year	*Imprisonment*	*Disqualification (of total cases prosecuted)*
2000-01	2	10
2001-02	4	24
2002-03	0	11
2003-04	3	11
2004-05	0	13
2005-06	1	9
2006-07	7	10
2007-08	6	6
2008-09	3	4
2009-10	2	11

The following table provides figures for all persons imprisoned or disqualified following prosecutions by the Department for offences under the Companies Acts during this period:

Financial year	*Imprisonment*	*Disqualification (of total cases prosecuted)*
2000-01	2	23
2001-02	11	35
2002-03	7	34
2003-04	6	39
2004-05	8	34
2005-06	8	36
2006-07	9	14
2007-08	17	23
2008-09	12	11
2009-10	21	17

The following table provides figures for all persons imprisoned or disqualified following prosecutions by the Department for all offences during this period:

Financial year	*Total number of convictions*	*Imprisonment*	*Disqualification (of total cases prosecuted)*
2000-01	347	32	231
2001-02	365	32	116
2002-03	332	21	112
2003-04	259	21	75
2004-05	250	19	78
2005-06	190	22	78
2006-07	184	31	53
2007-08	250	48	75
2008-09	197	37	47
2009-10	164	47	53

All figures provided relate to prosecutions brought by the Department. We do not hold relevant figures pertaining to prosecutions brought by any other prosecuting authority.

Student Loans Company: Fees and Charges

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what the monetary value was of outstanding tuition fees not paid by the Student Loans Company in each of the last three years; [30956]

(2) how much and what proportion of tuition fees had not been paid by the Student Loans Company within *(a)* six and *(b)* 12 months of the due date in the latest academic year for which figures are available. [30957]

(3) what proportion of tuition fees was paid on time by the Student Loans Company in the latest academic year for which figures are available. [30958]

Mr Willetts: Where students take out loans for tuition from the Student Loans Company (SLC), payments are normally made direct to universities in two instalments, in February and May each year. I am informed by SLC that almost all tuition fees are paid promptly once the student's attendance has been confirmed. Comparatively small sums (less than 0.1% of the total) are held back, usually due to the need to reconcile overpayments made in previous academic years (for example, when a student leaves their course early and the full amount of tuition fee, already paid, may no longer be applicable). This is illustrated as follows. Figures are not available for AY2007/08 and earlier.

AY2009/10

Domicile	*Amount paid (£ billion)*	*Amount outstanding (£)*	*Percentage outstanding*	*Estimate of amount outstanding (£)*	*Percentage of estimate of amount outstanding*
England	2.33	[1]n/a	n/a	529,000	0.02
All UK	2.60	595,000	0.02	n/a	n/a

n/a = Not available

[1] There are no comparative figures available for amounts outstanding for England only.

Note:

Data calculated as at early December 2010

AY2008/09

Domicile	*Amount paid (£ billion)*	*Amount outstanding (£)*	*Percentage outstanding*	*Estimate of amount outstanding (£)*	*Percentage of estimate of amount outstanding*
England	2.01	[1]n/a	n/a	778,000	0.04
All UK	2.24	875,000	0.04	n/a	n/a

n/a = Not available

[1] There are no comparative figures available for amounts outstanding for England only.

Note:

Data calculated as at early December 2009

Telephone Services: Health

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether his Department has provided funding for the launch and operation of the European Harmonised Number for Emotional Support; and if he will make a statement. [30732]

Mr Vaizey: Ofcom launched a comparative selection process for the 116123 "Emotional support helpline" service in February 2009 and allocated it to the charity Samaritans and its chosen communications provider BT in October 2009 after an extensive selection process. The number is now operational alongside Samaritans' UK-wide 0845 number and local branch numbers.

The Department for Business does not provide funding for any of the 116 range of numbers.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan: Females

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of his Department's funding to projects in Afghanistan has been allocated to projects to support women's organisations and activities in the last 12 months; and what projects have been so supported. [31408]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The UK Government are placing women at the heart of the whole of our agenda for international development. All the Department for International Development's (DFID) programmes take account of their impact on women and girls in their design and implementation. DFID has supported a number of programmes that directly benefit women's organisations and activities in Afghanistan over the past year. For example, our support to the International Planned Parenthood Foundation and WOMANKIND Worldwide is supporting civil society organisations in Afghanistan in addressing the human rights and practical needs of women and girls.

DFID has also committed £12 million from 2010-11 to 2012-13 to the Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Programme, implemented by the Afghan Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation Development. The programme has a Gender Equality Strategy, which has helped to ensure that men and women participate almost equally in project-supported activities.

Afghanistan: Overseas Aid

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of aid from his Department was allocated to each province in Afghanistan in the latest period for which figures are available. [31108]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: In 2009-10 approximately 16% of the Department for International Development's (DFID's) bilateral programme budget in Afghanistan was spent directly in Helmand province. The remaining 84% was spent on programmes that cover the whole of Afghanistan (including Helmand).

Departmental Equality

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he intends to publish an updated Gender Equality Action Plan for his Department; and what consultation he plans to carry out on the plan. [31107]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development's (DFID's) Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) has been extended until March 2011. DFID currently has regular and ongoing dialogue on our GEAP, for example with Bond and the Gender and Development Network, with whom officials will be meeting on 12 January.

The UK Government are placing women at the heart of the whole of our agenda for international development. We have set out our objectives for empowering women and girls in DFID's Business Plan 2011-15. These are to increase the number of girls in primary and secondary education, promote economic empowerment of women and girls, pilot new approaches to violence against women and improve maternal health and access to family planning. The Business Plan is available on the No. 10 website and in the Library of the House.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what budgetary guidance his Department has issued to each country office on *(a)* existing spending agreements, *(b)* contractual arrangements with external parties or governments and *(c)* future funding programmes since the announcement of its bilateral spending review. [31406]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: Immediately after the election, a number of projects were identified as either poorly performing or of low priority. Country offices were instructed to reallocate identified funds to other priority areas as soon as was practical and to do so in line with existing contractual arrangements.

I launched a review of the UK's bilateral aid programmes on Wednesday 16 June 2010. While the review is ongoing, country teams have continued to implement existing programmes with the exception of those already identified as poorly performing or of low priority.

Ministers and officials in my Department are currently in discussion regarding the allocation of UK aid to countries and priority areas over the spending review period. Final decisions will be made upon the conclusion of the bilateral and multilateral aid reviews early next year.

Developing Countries: Agriculture

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to ensure aid for agricultural development funded by his Department reaches people living in rural areas. [30570]

Mr O'Brien: Our programmes are designed to ensure that end beneficiaries are identified from the outset. People in rural areas are a target group for agricultural development programmes. During implementation, we regularly monitor progress to ensure that programmes are delivering their intended results. Once a programme has finished, a formal project completion report assesses results achieved against objectives set.

For some programmes, specifically those which are large scale or innovative in design, we subsequently carry out full evaluations to ensure that lessons learned during implementation are captured and taken into account in the design of subsequent programmes to improve their effectiveness. These evaluations are published so that other donors can use them in the design of their own programmes.

The reports are also open to public and parliamentary scrutiny, providing a direct line of accountability for DFID's activities. From next summer we are taking this a step further with the launch of an Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) which will have a remit to evaluate and review any UK aid spending. The Independent Commission will be clearly separated from DFID, reporting directly to Parliament.

Madagascar: Agriculture

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans his Department has to assist Madagascar in its agricultural development. [30719]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has no bilateral programme in Madagascar. We have no plans to offer direct assistance on agricultural development. All of our funding to Madagascar—over £51 million in 2008-09—is provided through our attributed share to multilateral institutions such as the EU, World Bank and African Development Bank.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans his Department has to help Madagascar to meet its commitments under the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme. [30720]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) strongly supports implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), as well as related initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and African Union work to establish long term investment plans and increase the proportion of national budgets for agriculture. DFID is providing a £10 million grant to a Multi-Donor Trust Fund, with the World Bank, which will facilitate the implementation of the CAADP. DFID does not provide separate bilateral funding to Madagascar to support CAADP implementation.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on agricultural development in Madagascar in each of the last five years. [30724]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has no bilateral programme in Madagascar. We have provided no direct assistance on agricultural development over the last five years. All of our funding to Madagascar—over £51 million in 2008-09—is provided through our attributed share to multilateral institutions such as the EU, World Bank and African Development Bank.

Madagascar: Climate Change

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment his Department has made on the effects of climate change on agriculture and food security in Madagascar. [30721]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has no bilateral programme in Madagascar. We have made no direct assessment of the effects of climate change on agriculture and food security in Madagascar.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what steps his Department *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take in the future to ensure that the poorest and most marginal farmers in Madagascar can adapt to climate change; [30722]

(2) how much his Department has spent on climate change adaptation for smallholder farmers in Madagascar in each of the last five years; and what proportion of his Department's expenditure on *(a)* climate change measures overseas, *(b)* climate change measures adaptation overseas, *(c)* climate change in the developing world and *(d)* climate change adaptation in the developing world this represented in each such year. [30723]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has no bilateral programme in Madagascar. We have provided no direct assistance on climate change adaptation for poor and marginal farmers in Madagascar over the last five years.

Earlier this month, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced extra support to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). In 2010-11 DFID has allocated £36.75 million to the CGIAR, including £7.25 million for a new CGIAR Consortium Research Programme, which will help adapt farming systems in the developing world to both current and progressive climate change and to limit its impact. DFID has also provided £10 million (from 2008 up to 2012) to the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa, of which Madagascar is a member, to support research into agricultural issues, including climate change adaptation.

Madagascar: Food

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the level of food security in Madagascar. [30718]

Mr O'Brien: According to the World Food Programme (WFP), the food security situation in southern Madagascar is likely to worsen in the coming months as a result of consecutive droughts and poor rainfall. The Department for International Development (DFID) has no bilateral programme in Madagascar, but will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Madagascar: Food Aid

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on emergency food aid for Madagascar in each of the last five years. [30725]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has provided over £3 million in total, over the last five years, to United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to respond to the most urgent humanitarian needs in Madagascar. Funds have been spent on: emergency treatment for acutely malnourished children; emergency assistance to help communities recover from the damage and destruction caused by tropical storms and cyclones; and the pre-positioning of stocks in the event of future disasters. No specific support to emergency food aid has been provided to date.

Sub-Saharan Africa: Food

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will hold discussions with his Chinese counterpart on the effects on local food production in sub-Saharan Africa of deforestation attributable to the development of palm oil plantations by Chinese land owners. [29940]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) are working in partnership with China on a project on the international palm oil industry. This is developing the rationale for the import into China of sustainable palm oil products. This will cover work on Chinese investments overseas, including in Africa. It will conclude in March 2011 with a report and policy options, which we will discuss with the Chinese Ministry of Commerce.

UN Central Emergency Relief Fund: Conferences

Mr Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which Ministers from his Department he expects to attend the forthcoming UN Central Emergency Relief Fund replenishment conference; and if he will make a statement. [27704]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The UK Permanent Representative to the UN in New York represented the UK at the UN Central Emergency Relief Fund replenishment conference which took place on 14 December and made a statement outlining our ongoing support.

The UK provided £40 million to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in 2010 and I have just released an additional £40 million for 2011. Future contributions to the CERF will be determined as part of the Multilateral Aid Review, which will report in February 2011.

HEALTH

Abortion

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pregnancy terminations among women under the age of 19 years there were in Brighton and Hove in each year since 2007. [31102]

Anne Milton: Information on the number of abortions carried out on women under the age of 19 resident in Brighton and Hove in each year since 2007 can be found in the following table.

Abortions for women aged under 19, resident in Brighton and Hove PCT, 2007-09

	Number
2007	168

Abortions for women aged under 19, resident in Brighton and Hove PCT, 2007-09

	Number
2008	158
2009	138

Source:
Statistical Bulletin, Abortion Statistics, England and Wales for 2007, 2008 and 2009

Baby Care Units

Dr Wollaston: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made on the effect of introduction of the toolkit for high quality neo-natal service on care for pre-term babies since 2009; [31048]

(2) what plans he has for the future number of neonatal nurses *(a)* nationally, *(b)* in the South West and *(c)* in Totnes constituency; [31117]

(3) if he will take steps to improve neonatal services *(a)* nationally, *(b)* in the South West and *(c)* in Totnes constituency. [31118]

Anne Milton: The Toolkit for High Quality Neonatal Services and the recently published National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) Quality Standard for Specialist Neonatal Care are valuable tools to assist national health service commissioners and providers in the provision high quality care for babies and their families.

Since publication of the Toolkit, progress has been made. Every neonatal unit is now part of a managed clinical network and networks have increased transport services hours and coverage. There is still more to do. As set out in the NICE Quality Standard, networks, commissioners and providers will wish to undertake an annual needs assessment and ensure each network has adequate capacity. This includes ensuring there are appropriate numbers of neonatal nurses.

Dr Wollaston: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much he has allocated to neonatal care *(a)* nationally, *(b)* in the South West and *(c)* in Totnes constituency in each year of the spending review period. [31116]

Anne Milton: The Department currently makes recurrent revenue allocations direct to primary care trusts (PCTs) on the basis of a national weighted capitation formula which is used to determine each PCTs target share of available resources. The components of the formula are used to weight each PCTs population according to their relative need (age and additional need), for healthcare and the unavoidable geographical differences in the cost of providing healthcare (the market forces factor).

PCT recurrent revenue allocations are not broken down by policy or service area. Once allocated, it is for PCTs to commission the services they require to meet the healthcare needs of their local populations, taking account of both local and national priorities.

Carers: Social Services

David Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent steps his Department has taken to improve services for carers. [30617]

Paul Burstow: The Government published an update to the 2008 Carers Strategy on 25 November 2010. "Recognised, valued and supported: Next Steps for the Carers Strategy" sets out clear priorities for the next four years, focusing on the four areas which will have the biggest impact on carers' lives:

supporting those with caring responsibilities to identify themselves as carers at an early stage;

enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfil their educational and employment potential;

personalised support both for carers and those they support; and

supporting carers to remain mentally and physically well.

In addition, the Department will provide additional funding of £400 million to the national health service over the next four years to enable more carers to take breaks from their caring responsibilities. The 2011-12 NHS Operating Framework states that primary care trusts (PCTs) should pool budgets with local authorities to provide carers' breaks, as far as possible, via direct payments or personal health budgets. For 2011-12, PCTs should agree policies, plans and budgets to support carers with local authorities and local carers' organisations, and make them available to local people.

The Department will also provide up to £6 million to fund training to increase general practitioners' awareness and understanding of carers' needs for support.

Doctors: Training

Richard Fuller: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department has conducted any research into the reasons why some foundation house officers do not complete their foundation training. [29861]

Anne Milton: The UK Foundation Programme Office has collected data since 2009 on the reasons foundation doctors do not complete foundation training.

There are a number of reasons why some foundation doctors do not complete their training. Some resign, some leave the programme for personal/family reasons, some transfer to flexible training, some require remedial training and are therefore unable to progress until this is completed, and a small number are dismissed from the training programme because of disciplinary or performance issues.

The proportion of doctors who did not complete foundation training in 2009 was 6%, and 5.42% in 2010.

General Practitioners: West Midlands

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners provide out-of-hours care in *(a)* Coventry and *(b)* the West Midlands. [30807]

Anne Milton: This information is not collected centrally. This information may be available directly from the West Midlands primary care trusts.

Herbal Medicine: Regulation

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Bosworth (David Tredinnick) of 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 165, on the regulation of qualified herbalists, what plans he has for the regulation of practitioners of Chinese herbal medicine; and if he will make a statement. [31303]

Anne Milton: In my response to the hon. Member for Bosworth (David Tredinnick) of 8 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 337W, I indicated that the Government are currently considering their overall strategy on professional regulation, including the possibility of establishing a registration scheme for practitioners of traditional forms of medicine. Consideration of the feasibility of such a scheme applies to both herbal medicines practitioners and practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine.

Hospitals: Admissions

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the survival rate was for acute myocardial infarction within 30 days after emergency hospital admission in *(a)* each primary care trust and *(b)* England in each of the last 10 years. [30712]

Mr Simon Burns: Data on survival rates are not available centrally.

However, data for the standardised rate of deaths within 30 days of emergency admission to hospital for patients aged 35 to 74 years who have had a myocardial infarction are available, and the figures for the financial years 1999-2000 to 2008-09 have been placed in the Library. These are the latest 10 financial years available.

In Vitro Fertilisation: Homosexuality

Jonathan Reynolds: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether same sex couples are eligible to receive IVF treatment on the NHS. [31409]

Anne Milton: Access to national health service funded fertility services is based on clinical need. If a couple has clinical grounds for accessing NHS fertility treatment, then provision should be considered regardless of the patient's sexual orientation.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is currently updating its fertility guidelines. NICE is at the stage of gathering evidence and currently expects to publish the final updated guidelines towards the end of 2012. The scope of the update includes consideration of treatment for same sex couples.

Kidneys: Donors

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations he has received on the use of kidneys from non-heartbeating donors within the national kidney allocation scheme. [30935]

Anne Milton: Donation after cardiac death (DCD) has been increasing steadily in the United Kingdom for some years. NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), an arm's length body of the Department, recently welcomed a study reported in *The Lancet*, which highlighted the success of kidney transplants from DCD donors.

Although DCD is not a substitute for donation after brain stem death, it increases the number of people who can benefit from a transplant. NHSBT has set up a working party to consider possible changes to the national allocation scheme for DCD donor kidneys.

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he plans to take to increase availability of kidneys for donation from heartbeating and non-heartbeating donors. [30937]

Anne Milton: We realise that people waiting for a kidney transplant represent the highest proportion of people on the transplant waiting list. Kidney transplant also has the highest potential to release savings to the national health service through decreasing demand on renal haemodialysis.

The Department has therefore worked with NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) and other key professional organisations since the Organ Donation Taskforce presented 14 recommendations in early 2008. Work has focussed on redesigning and strengthening the NHS infrastructure to help ensure that all potential donors are identified and their families approached with the offer of organ donation.

Steady improvement is being made. During 2009-10, organ donor rates increased to nearly 20%, over the baseline year of 2007-08. NHSBT aim to see organ donor rates continue to rise, allowing many more people to benefit from a life saving or life enhancing transplant.

Kidneys: Transplant Surgery

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his most recent estimate is of the number of *(a)* women, *(b)* men and *(c)* children on waiting lists for kidney transplants; and what recent estimate he has made of the average time spent on such a waiting list by each type of patient. [30934]

Anne Milton: The number of patients currently on the waiting list for a kidney transplant as at 13 December 2010 is in the table.

	Status		
Gender/age	*Active*	*Suspended*[1]	*Tota*
Male	4,138	1,603	5,741
Female	2,923	1,048	3,971
Gender not reported	9	3	12
Paediatric	110	34	144
Adult	6,960	2,620	9,580
Total	7,070	2,654	9,724

[1] Suspended indicates those patients on the waiting list who are temporarily suspended from the list for a number of reasons. Sometimes patients are suspended from the waiting list because of, for example an infection which results in them not being well enough for a transplant or a wish to have a holiday.

The numbers include patients also waiting for other organs in addition to a kidney (such as kidney/pancreas).

The average waiting times are 1,088 days for adults and 276 days for children. NHS Blood and Transplant does not have figures on the average waiting time split between males and females. However, previous analyses have shown that female patients wait longer for transplants than males. This is due to higher levels of sensitisation in female patients caused by pregnancies, which means that it can be more difficult to identify a compatible donor.

Maternity Services

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many maternity units closed in each primary healthcare trust area in the latest period for which figures are available. [31042]

Anne Milton: The information requested is not collected by the Department.

Mental Health Services

Anne Marie Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department plans to increase the funding available to support mental health early intervention teams. [29227]

Paul Burstow: The funding plans have already been set out in the spending review and the national health service is sufficiently funded to support the commissioning of early intervention teams. The Government are supportive of the use of evidence-based care, such as early intervention, for young people with first onset psychosis. However, it is for local commissioners and providers to make the decisions on commissioning and providing specific services.

Palliative Care: Prisoners

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what palliative care provision there is for prisoners; and if he will make a statement. [30808]

Paul Burstow: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Blackpool North and Cleveleys (Paul Maynard) on 9 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 390-91W.

Primary Care Trusts: West Midlands

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received from local authorities in the West Midlands on the transfer of public health responsibilities from primary care trusts. [30806]

Mr Simon Burns: The Regional Director of Public Health (RDPH) in the West Midlands has individually met all the chief executives of local authorities in the region to discuss the future public health system. She is leading the transition arrangements within the West Midlands on behalf of the Department, and local authority chief executives are involved in those arrangements. Chief executives from across the region are members of the main transition group.

Following publication of the Public Health White Paper "Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our Strategy for Public Health in England", the Government will shortly consult on both the public health outcomes framework and the commissioning and funding for public health. The RDPH will continue to work closely with local government during and after the consultation period to ensure we address areas of concern, facilitated by arrangements for several consultation events across the West Midlands.

Swine Flu

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations he has received from the Health Protection Agency on preparedness for any outbreak of the *(a)* H5N1 and *(b)* H1N1 virus; and if he will make a statement. [31011]

Anne Milton: The Health Protection Agency (HPA) works closely with the Department to ensure the national health service remains prepared should a new pandemic emerge. The HPA has links with other international agencies and regularly monitors the situation on outbreaks of H5N1 influenza in other countries. The 2009 pandemic tested organisations' plans and the NHS remains well prepared should a new pandemic emerge. This includes the potential for a more severe pandemic, such as could be caused by bird flu, and supplies of H5N1 prepandemic vaccine have been purchased as part of the preparedness plans. The Department is currently reviewing the national strategy for pandemic preparedness and will take into account the lessons learned from the H1N1 2009 swine flu response and recent scientific evidence.

The HPA publishes a Weekly National Influenza Report, which is available at:

www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/SeasonalInfluenza/EpidemiologicalData/02influsweeklyreport/

The H1N1 (2009) virus is now regarded as one of the group of seasonal influenza viruses in general circulation and therefore the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommendations on the use of antivirals for treatment and prophylaxis will apply during the 2010-11 influenza season. This was communicated to the NHS by the director of immunisation in a letter dated 10 December 2010 which is available at:

www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_122573.pdf

A copy of this letter has been placed in the Library.

The seasonal flu vaccine offers protection against H1N1 (2009) and two other strains of flu virus. The Department encourages all those aged 65 or over, those with a condition that puts them at risk from the effects of flu, and pregnant women to take up the offer of vaccination if they have not already done so.

Swine Flu: Vaccination

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department has issued guidance to primary care trusts and GPs on the use of vaccination against the *(a)* H5N1 and *(b)* H1N1 virus. [31021]

Anne Milton: The Department has issued information to primary care trusts and general practitioners about the annual seasonal influenza immunisation programme for winter 2010-11. This programme offers vaccination against the H1N1 swine influenza virus.

The interim chief medical officer's letter to the national health service dated 23 June 2010 on the seasonal influenza immunisation programme is available at:

www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_116943.pdf

A copy of this letter has been placed in the Library.

A letter from the director of immunisation was sent to the NHS on 19 November 2010 to highlight the importance of achieving high uptake of seasonal influenza vaccine in eligible groups. This letter is available at:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/
Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_121934

A copy of this letter has already been placed in the Library.

Supplies of H5N1 pre-pandemic vaccine have been purchased as part of the preparedness plan and relevant advice would be issued as required in the case of the vaccine being distributed.

Tamiflu

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness on patients of *(a)* Tamiflu and *(b)* Relenza. [31280]

Anne Milton: The antiviral drugs marketed as Tamiflu (oseltamivir) and Relenza (zanamivir) can be used in two broadly distinct disease settings. Firstly, in seasonal influenza, the kind of 'flu' that occurs annually over the winter months, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) have examined the effectiveness of both drugs and concluded that they both should be made available to treat at-risk patients with suspected influenza illness and when seasonal influenza virus is circulating.

This NICE guidance does not cover the use of these drugs in a second disease setting, pandemics of influenza, which occur only rarely but at potentially any time of year. For this situation, the Scientific Pandemic Influenza Advisory Committee (SPI) reviewed the effectiveness of Tamiflu and Relenza in 2007 and concluded that both drugs could have a significant beneficial impact in reducing morbidity and thus mortality. SPI is currently re-examining the scientific evidence base for the use of antiviral drugs in pandemic influenza. The output from this review will be published in early 2011.

Weather

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received on proposals for a national winter emergency plan; and if he will make a statement. [31667]

Anne Milton: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Bolton West (Julie Hilling) on 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 168W.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Bed and Breakfast Accommodation: Children

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate his Department has made of the number of children under the age of 16 years living in bed and breakfast accommodation between 2010 and 2015. [30667]

Grant Shapps: The latest homelessness statistics show that at the end of September 2010 there were 930 households in bed and breakfast-style temporary accommodation containing dependent children and/or a pregnant woman. Within these households there were 1,490 children or expected children. The Department has not produced forecasts for future years.

Under homelessness legislation that applies to England, bed and breakfast cannot be used by a local housing authority to discharge a duty to secure accommodation for applicants who are pregnant, or whose household includes a pregnant woman or a dependant child, unless no other accommodation is available and then for no more than six weeks aggregate.

This Government are committed to tackling and preventing homelessness. We have protected Homelessness Grant funding, with £400 million over the spending review period. This will be made available to local authorities and the voluntary sector to support their work to tackle homelessness. We have made an additional £190 million available for discretionary housing payments and other forms of practical support alongside the Government's package of welfare reform measures.

I also refer the right hon. Member to my letter on the spending review's settlement for housing of 20 October 2010, a copy of which is in the Library of the House, on our plans to build more affordable homes and renovate poor quality social housing.

Children: Day Care

Bill Esterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he plans to provide alternative forms of *(a)* provision and *(b)* support to adults using day centres where such services are withdrawn as a result of local authority spending reductions. [31304]

Robert Neill: Local government are responsible for decisions on the delivery of social care in their area. The Government have provided additional funding in recognition of the adult social care pressures that local authorities will face and the importance Government place on social care, including an extra £1 billion which the NHS will make available by 2014-15 in order to support social care services which benefit health.

Community Groups

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many *(a)* public houses, *(b)* libraries and *(c)* community centres have transferred ownership to community groups in each of the last five years in (i) Scotland, (ii) England and (iii) Wales; and if he will make a statement. [31307]

Andrew Stunell: There are no centrally held records of completed asset transfers in England. However, the Asset Transfer Unit, which is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government, holds statistics for completed asset transfers relating to government-funded asset transfer programmes, and these show that there has been a total of 51 transfers since 2007. This total includes 15 community centres and five libraries. A survey carried out by SQW consultants in 2009 for the Development Trusts Association indicated that of around 1,000 transfers under way in England, approximately one third related to community centres. As many public houses are privately owned and purchased, there are no centrally held records. According to figures provided by the Plunkett Foundation, there are three legally registered co-operative pubs in England. Figures for other forms of community ownership of pubs are not available.

Information relating to Scotland and Wales is a devolved matter.

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate he has made of the average time taken for the transfer of ownership of a public house to a community group in the latest year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [31308]

Andrew Stunell: There are no national statistics collected for the transfer of public houses to community ownership, so it is not possible to estimate the average time that a transfer takes.

The time it takes to transfer a public house to community ownership will vary considerably according to the local circumstances. Determining factors will include the expertise available within any particular community, the level of support that a community group can access to ensure they have the required knowledge and skills, the level of funding needed, and the operational condition of the pub.

Compulsory Purchase: Coastal Areas

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate he has made of the number of premises that were subject to a compulsory purchase order in each principal seaside town in England in the last year for which figures are available. [31372]

Robert Neill: The Department does not hold estimates of the number of premises subject to compulsory purchase orders. However the number of orders in principal seaside towns confirmed by the Secretary of State was three, the number referred back to the acquiring authority for their own confirmation was seven and the number not confirmed was four. This information has been based on the addresses show on each individual order.

My officials will retrieve the relevant files from archive and I will write to the hon. Member confirming the number of plots.

Council Housing: Surveys

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects to announce his plans for the future of the NI160 Status Survey Grant. [30730]

Grant Shapps: I wrote to local authority chief executives on 10 August 2010 setting out that, as part of the Government's commitment to reducing centrally imposed burdens, stock holding local authorities would no longer be required to complete the Status survey or report against National Indicator 160 on local authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services. Along with the Place Survey, these were expensive and burdensome cosmetic exercises. Instead, the new Government will be strengthening social tenants rights of redress as outlined in my Department's press notice of 18 October 2010.

Local authority chief executives were notified in a letter dated 26 October that payments made through area based grant in respect of work to undertake the Status survey would consequently cease from October 2010.

Council Tax

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much on average was levied in council tax per dwelling in each local authority in 2009-10. [30775]

Robert Neill: The latest information on the average council tax levied per dwelling for individual authorities in England for 2009-10 was published in table 6 of the statistical release "Council tax levels set by local authorities in England 2009-10 (Revised)". This release was issued on 30 July 2009 and is available on the Department for Communities and Local Government website at:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/counciltax200910update

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what his Department's annual budget for conferences was on (*a*) 7 May 2010 and (*b*) 7 December 2010. [29962]

Robert Neill: In May 2010 the Government announced plans to achieve £6.2 billion of savings in 2010-11 and introduced an immediate freeze on new marketing and communications spend. The Department, therefore, cancelled all space and stands at exhibitions and conferences except where they had already been paid for in full and cancellation costs exceeded the costs of attendance. Advice was also given to managers that careful consideration should be given to staff attendance at conferences, but they may continue to do so where appropriate.

The Department does not set an annual budget for conferences. Budgets are delegated to managers who have flexibility to move resources between different expenditure categories and update their expenditure plans monthly.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31231]

Robert Neill: The Department for Communities and Local Government does not currently employ, and has not employed in the last financial year, any staff who are paid less than a rate equivalent to the London living wage.

Departmental Plants

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much the (*a*) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and (*b*) Deputy Prime Minister's Office spent on pot plants during the period it was a Government Department. [29380]

Robert Neill: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer of 14 September 2010, *Official Report*, column 1027W, given to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Andrew Griffiths).

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister existed from May 2002 to May 2006 before becoming the Department of Communities and Local Government (ODPM). In July 2004, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister signed a contract with its current facilities management supplier for maintenance of internal plants in Eland House. Details on the expenditure on pot plants prior to July 2004 are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

ODPM spent the following on the maintenance of pot plants during that period.

Contract year July to June	*Cost (£)*
2004-05	5,555.88
2005-06	5,555.88

In July 2010, the Department gave due notice that this contract will be terminated; the contract will formally end in September 2010.

Details of the expenditure on pot plants by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office are not held.

Departmental Recruitment

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much his Department and its agencies spent on job advertisements in *The Guardian* newspaper in *(a)* 2007-08, *(b)* 2008-09 and *(c)* 2009-10. [29378]

Robert Neill: The Department has spent the following with *The Guardian* newspaper on job advertisements:

	£
2007-08	31,174
2008-09	26,215
2009-10	0
Total	57,389

The Department' agencies have spent the following:

The Planning Inspectorate

	£
2007-08	3,450
2008-09	0
2009-10	6,871
Total	10,320

Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre

	£
2007-08	2,044
2008-09	3,067
2009-10	0
Total	5,111

Fire Service College

	£
2007-08	[1]
2008-09	1,116
2009-10	0
Total	1,116

[1] Fire Service college could supply figures for 2007-08 only at disproportionate cost.

Note:
Figures include VAT

As outlined in my Department's press notice of 6 July 2010, we believe there is significant scope to save taxpayers' money by publishing job vacancies online in an open and standardised format.

Housing Revenue Accounts

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with reference to the answer to the hon. Member for Swindon South of 30 April 2007, *Official Report*, column 1518W, on housing revenue accounts, how much each local authority in England has paid to the Exchequer from its housing revenue account in each year since 2005-06. [31127]

Andrew Stunell: The housing revenue account subsidy amounts either paid or received by each local authority to the Exchequer for the years 2005-06 to 2009-10, are shown in a table that has been placed in the Library of the House. Negative figures denote subsidy payments made to the Exchequer.

Housing: Construction

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) how many homes started by the Homes and Communities Agency in 2009-10 have been completed since 1 April 2010; [30697]

(2) how many homes started by the Homes and Communities Agency in 2009-10 have not been completed. [30698]

Grant Shapps: The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) published official statistics detailing its housing delivery programme achievements for the six months from 1 April 2010 to 30 September on 30 November 2010:

http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/six-monthly-housing-statistics

The total number of units expected to be completed in 2010-11 are available in the update to HCA's Corporate Plan:

http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/public/documents/Corporate-Plan-2010-11-update.pdf

Completions this year will be made up of starts from a number of earlier years so will not correlate directly with the starts from 2009-10.

Housing: Disability

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he has had recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change on the effect of cold housing on disabled people; and if he will make a statement. [31306]

Andrew Stunell: Ministers in this Department have had a number of discussions with Ministers at the Department for Energy and Climate Change on measures to improve the energy efficiency of homes, so that all sections of the community can have warmer homes and lower fuel bills, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change has recently published proposals for the Green Deal, which is intended to achieve that. We have not had specific discussions about the effect of colder housing on disabled people.

Planning

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what funding his Department has allocated to assist local areas to meet the cost of preparing neighbourhood plans; [30691]

(2) what funding his Department has allocated to assist local areas with the cost of conducting referendums on neighbourhood plans. [30788]

Greg Clark: Funding for local authorities on neighbourhood planning is subject to the final outcome of the spending review process. I expect to make further announcements in due course. We have already announced funding and assistance for a Neighbourhood Planning Vanguard Scheme, information on which can be found at:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/neighbourhoodplanningvanguards/

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what organisations his Department plans to classify as competent to prepare and conduct consultations on neighbourhood plans. [30700]

Greg Clark: A parish council or a neighbourhood forum will be able to bring forward proposals for neighbourhood planning.

In unparished areas, any organisation which is established to further the well-being of residents of a neighbourhood, consists of and is open to all individuals living in the neighbourhood and has a written constitution can apply to the local authority to be considered as the neighbourhood forum for that area.

Before being brought into effect, all proposals for neighbourhood planning must have the approval of a majority of voters in a referendum.

Planning: Referendums

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what rights he plans to give to *(a)* residents, *(b)* parish councils and *(c)* community groups to challenge the outcome of a referendum on a neighbourhood plan. [30787]

Greg Clark: Parish councils will have the power to bring forward proposals for neighbourhood planning. Residents and community groups will have the opportunity to be engaged during the development of proposals and to make representations to an independent examination of proposals before they are put to a referendum.

Actions of any public authority are also subject to challenge through existing legal processes.

Sleeping Rough

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what data his Department holds on the age profile of rough sleepers contacted by outreach services since May 2010. [30664]

Grant Shapps: The Department does not collect information on the age profile of rough sleepers contacted by outreach services. However, the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) database in London, which the Department funds Broadway (a homelessness charity) to run, does collect this information. Their "Street to Home" annual report 2009-10 indicates the following breakdown:

Age	*Percentage*
Under 18	0
18-25	8
26-35	26
36-45	35
46-55	21
Over 55	10

Source: CHAIN, London.

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government which local authorities have not conducted a street count of rough sleepers in 2010. [30666]

Grant Shapps: Information on rough sleeping counts is available both in the Library and via the DCLG website:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/xls/1648099.xls

Since 1998, only councils in areas with a known, or suspected, rough sleeping problem were required to conduct an official rough sleeper count, which meant that only 70 councils submitted information to central Government. Figures published in July 2010 showed that under this previous method, on any given night there were 440 rough sleepers in England. However, when the remaining 256 councils provided estimates of the scale of the problem in their areas, this added a further estimated 807 rough sleepers, taking the national total to 1,247 rough sleepers on any given night.

Under new guidance, all councils across England will now provide information on rough sleeping. This move follows consultation with homelessness charities and councils and is aimed at getting a clearer picture of the scale of the problem in each area so more targeted support can be provided to some of the most vulnerable in society.

Social Rented Housing: Central Heating

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in how many social homes central heating was newly installed on at least one floor between 1997-98 and 2009-10. [30780]

Andrew Stunell: We do not hold the data requested. Since 2001 we have collected data on the number of council dwellings that have had works to improve their central heating. 1,265,000 dwellings have received such works. We do not collect similar data from housing associations.

Social Rented Housing: Double Glazing

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many social homes were fitted with double glazing between 1997-98 and 2009-10. [30777]

Andrew Stunell: We do not hold the data requested. Since 2001 we have collected data on the number of council dwellings that have had windows replaced (it is reasonable to assume most replacement windows will be double glazed units). 1,172,000 dwellings have received replacement windows. We do not collect similar data from housing associations.

Social Rented Housing: Repairs and Maintenance

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much funding his Department provided for repair and modernisation of social housing in each year from 1997-98 to 2009-10. [30791]

Andrew Stunell: The following tables set out the funding support provided by the Department for repair and modernisation of social housing in each year from 1997-98 to 2009-10. Funding is provided in the form of Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Allowances and Capital Funding Allocations to local authorities. In addition, the Department has provided gap funding to housing associations in a limited number of housing stock transfers.

Departmental support by year for local authorities and gap funded housing associations

£

	HRA subsidy allowances			*HRA capital funding*			
	Management and maintenance allowance	*Major repairs allowance*	*Private finance initiative*	*ALMO funding*	*Local authority supported capital expenditure*	*Gap funding for housing associations*	*Total departmental support by year*
1997-98	3,305,129,205	—	—	—	443,000,000		3,748,129,205
1998-99	3,222,794,448	—	—	—	386,000,000		3,608,794,448
1999-2000	2,004,693,448	—	—	—	452,000,000		2,456,693,448
2000-01	1,964,595,014	—	—	—	1,819,000,000	—	3,783,595,014
2001-02	1,924,186,919	1,586,912,234	—	—	684,000,000	—	4,195,099,153
2002-03	1,922,998,987	1,528,961,056	—	55,924,286	785,000,000	—	4,292,884,329
2003-04	1,895,030,656	1,455,753,376	3,349,224	321,126,161	837,000,000	—	4,512,259,417
2004-05	1,980,122,628	1,402,024,575	13,470,756	576,803,882	741,004,000	1,600,000	4,715,030,841
2005-06	2,046,667,384	1,353,498,281	21,629,591	854,162,176	821,716,993	9,772,000	5,107,446,425
2006-07	2,115,024,665	1,307,534,539	47,497,727	781,814,984	341,070,000	31,842,000	4,624,783,915
2007-08	2,046,612,201	1,247,960,645	84,648,077	925,690,000	311,680,000	79,277,000	4,695,867,923
2008-09	2,049,298,214	1,240,045,822	86,752,135	896,110,590	272,418,000	124,956,000	4,660,580,761
2009-10	2,048,328,187	1,250,408,574	91,541,916	930,000,000	266,027,000	148,786,000	4,735,091,677
Total	28,516,481,956	12,373,099,102	348,894,426	5,341,632,079	8,159,915,993	396,233,000	55,136,256,556

Social Services: Blackpool

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what proportion of the revenue spending power allocated to Blackpool borough council for 2011-12 he plans to allocate to NHS support for social care. [31412]

Robert Neill: The Government are providing £1 billion of additional funding by 2014-15, through the health budget, to break down the barriers between health and social care. Blackpool primary care trust will transfer £2.442 million to Blackpool borough council in 2011-12 to support social care and benefit health. The Government will set out more detail on how the NHS should use this funding to support social care in the 2011-12 Operating Framework, which it will publish shortly.

Tenancy Deposit Schemes

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 184W, on tenancy deposit schemes, who funds the free adjudication service for landlords in dispute over tenancy deposits. [30655]

Grant Shapps: The alternative dispute resolution services operated by the three tenancy deposit protection schemes are funded by the scheme providers as part of their overall running costs.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 20 December 2010

PRIME MINISTER

North East

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Prime Minister on what dates he has visited the north-east since his appointment; and what the purpose was of each such visits. [31793]

The Prime Minister: I hope to visit the north-east soon.

Schools: Sports

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 9 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 381W, on the Schools Sports Partnerships scheme, how many representations *(a)* his Office and *(b)* the Department for Education received. [31952]

The Prime Minister: My Office and the Department for Education have received many representations on this issue. I refer the hon. Lady to the announcement the Secretary of State for Education, my right hon. Friend the Member for Surrey Heath (Michael Gove), has made on Schools Sports today.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

Equality Act 2010

Lindsay Roy: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what assessment the Regulatory Policy Committee made of the impact assessment on the implementation of the dual discrimination provisions in the Equality Act 2010. [31525]

Lynne Featherstone: The Regulatory Policy Committee has issued its Opinion on the impact assessment for the dual discrimination measure. The Regulatory Policy Committee's Opinions are not currently published, although this policy is under review.

Government Equalities Office: Visits Abroad

Priti Patel: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities how many overseas visits she expects *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in the Government Equalities Office to have undertaken at the end of 2010-11; and what estimate she has made of the costs under each budget heading of each such visit. [24202]

Lynne Featherstone: Between 1 April 2010 and 30 November 2010, the following overseas visits have been undertaken by Government Equalities Offices (GEOs) Ministers:

			£
Visit number	*Rail*	*Air*	*Hotel*
1	260		

During the same period, overseas visits undertaken by GEO staff are detailed as follows:

			£
Visit number	*Rail*	*Air*	*Hotel*
1	232		
2	232		
3	262		150
4	262		139
5		846	625
6	443		
7		469	
8	234		140
9		2,071	788
10	262		119
11		315	171
12	261		
13	217		
14	217		
15	217		
16		269	
17	262		100

As of 26 November 2010, the GEO is planning the following overseas visits for officials in the next six months:

The Council of Europe meeting on Equality between Women and Men in Strasburg on 8 to 10 December 2010;

The EU Commission High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming meeting in Budapest on 11 to 12 January 2011; and

The 55th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York on 22 February to 4 March 2011.

The costs of these visits under the relevant budget headings have not yet been confirmed.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Corruption

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Attorney-General what the Serious Fraud Office's policy is on claiming costs in transnational bribery and corruption cases for the purposes of funding further investigations. [28806]

The Attorney-General: The Serious Fraud Office does not claim costs in transnational bribery and corruption cases for the purpose of funding further investigations.

The SFO will consider costs in each case of transnational bribery and corruption as it does with all of its investigations into economic crime.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Attorney-General how many staff employed by the Law Officers' Departments were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31221]

The Attorney-General: All London based staff employed by the Law Officers' Departments are paid at a rate higher than the London living wage.

Domestic Violence: Prosecutions

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Attorney-General how many domestic violence specialist prosecutors were practising in England and Wales in each year since 2005. [31266]

The Attorney-General: All prosecutors and associate prosecutors were trained in domestic violence between 2005 and 2008 to ensure expertise in all cases.

New staff are provided with brief induction training on domestic violence, and are required to undertake pre-course work, including a workbook on the Infonet and e-learning. This is followed by a one-day practical classroom course on domestic violence. Currently there are just over 4,500 prosecutors and caseworkers employed by the CPS, all trained to deal with domestic violence cases.

In addition, many CPS areas select dedicated prosecutors to work in their area's Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVCs).

Witness Care Units: Finance

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Attorney-General how much funding the Crown Prosecution Service provided to witness care units in each year since 2005. [31071]

The Attorney-General: The funding provided to witness care units since financial year 2005-06 is shown in the following table. The funding includes the allocation made from Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) baseline resources, and the net additional funding received externally:

£ million

	CPS funding	*External funding*	*Total*
2005-06	0.000	4.670	4.670
2006-07	0.000	5.031	5.031
2007-08	2.481	4.834	7.315
2008-09	2.481	2.600	5.081
2009-10	2.481	2.600	5.081
2010-11	2.481	2.600	5.081

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Official Hospitality: Christmas

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many Christmas parties and drinks receptions his Department plans to host in December 2010. [30663]

Robert Neill: As the Secretary of State indicated in his departmental press notice of 29 November 2010, the new Administration is committed to celebrating Christmas, including its Christian heritage. We should not allow politically correct Grinches to marginalise Christmas and the importance of the birth of Christ.

Ministers recognise that we live in frugal times due to the need to pay off the significant public deficit and national debt that the Government have inherited from the previous administration. But there is no need to play Scrooge.

In this context, a Christmas tree has been placed in the Department's reception at Eland house which has been provided at no cost to the taxpayer. This is in contrast to the previous cost of £1,037 for a Christmas tree outlined in the parliamentary answer of 12 November 2009, *Official Report*, column 849W.

Ministers plan to hold one small reception for senior DCLG staff to thank them for their hard work this year. Their work includes the abolition of bureaucratic Comprehensive Area Assessment and other local red tape, stopping the imposition of bin taxes and the unfair ports tax, and laying the ground for radical new powers for local authorities through the Localism Bill. The reception will be held in Eland House. Individual divisions within the Department may hold Christmas lunches paid for by staff.

A Christmas quiz and Christmas fair are being held for staff to raise funds for the Civil Service Benevolent Fund. The fair included Christmas carols sung by the Environment, Transport and Communities choir, ETCetera, and by Westminster Cathedral primary school children.

Last year, the Department spent £2,855 of taxpayers' money on Christmas cards. This year the departmental Christmas card, now with appropriate Christian imagery, has been produced at no cost to the taxpayer and will be sent electronically. Recognising the need to look after the vulnerable at this time of year, we are also supporting the homeless charity Shelter in the card. We will ensure that the right hon. Member is included on the distribution list.

Domestic Violence: Victim Support Schemes

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much funding his Department has allocated for support to victims of domestic violence in each year since 2005. [31261]

Andrew Stunell: The provision of Supporting People housing related support services, including domestic violence provision, is a matter for local authorities to determine based on local needs and priorities. DCLG do not specify what portion of the Supporting People budget should be allocated to individual client groups. However, DCLG collect retrospective annual spend on services for women at risk of domestic violence client group funded from the Supporting People programme. Details of spend are provided in the following table.

Spend in England on housing related support services for women at risk of domestic violence funded by the Supporting People (SP) programme.

Financial year	*SP spend on women at risk of domestic violence (£000)*	*Total SP spend (£ billion)*	*Women at risk of domestic violence spend as a % of local SP spend*
2009-10	70,939	1,660	4.3
2008-09	66,878	1,640	4.1
2007-08	64,523	1,628	4.0

Financial year	*SP spend on women at risk of domestic violence (£000)*	*Total SP spend (£ billion)*	*Women at risk of domestic violence spend as a % of local SP spend*
2006-07	61,645	1.643	3.8
2005-06	59,333	1.682	3.5

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much funding his Department has allocated for support to victims of domestic violence in each year of the comprehensive spending review period; and if he will make a statement. [31262]

Andrew Stunell: The allocation of funds for domestic violence provision is a matter for local authorities to determine based on local needs and priorities. However, throughout the spending review we have been guided by a commitment to fairness, protecting the most vulnerable people in our society and as far as possible protecting frontline services. We have secured investment of £6.5 billion for the Supporting People programme over the next four years, which equates to an average annual reduction of less than 3% in cash terms. Local areas will continue to take decisions informed by local need in commissioning housing-related support services for victims of domestic violence.

Homelessness: Easington

Grahame M. Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate he has made of the *(a)* short-term and *(b)* long-term effects on levels of homelessness in Easington constituency of his Department's spending reductions. [31202]

Grant Shapps: This Government are committed to preventing homelessness. We have protected Homelessness Grant funding, with £400 million over the spending review period. This will be made available to local authorities and the voluntary sector to support their work to tackle homelessness. We have made an additional £190 million available for discretionary housing payments and other forms of practical support alongside the Government's package of welfare reform measures. We have also minimised reductions to the supporting people programme with £6.5 billion investment secured over the next four years.

Detailed allocations for local authorities were published on 13 December as part of the provisional local government settlement. This is available on the Department's website at:

http://www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/1112/specgrant1112/index.htm

It will be for local authorities to determine their spending priorities taking account of local circumstances. The Department for Communities and Local Government has not produced any estimates of the potential impacts of these decisions in the Easington constituency.

I also refer the hon. Member to my letter of 20 October 2010, on the Spending Review's Settlement for Housing, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. It outlines our plans to build more affordable homes and renovate rundown housing stock.

Homelessness: Greater London

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what his most recent estimate is of the number of homeless people in London. [30792]

Grant Shapps: Information about local authorities' discharge of their duties under homelessness legislation is collected on quarterly PIE returns. Summary information about English local housing authorities' actions under the homelessness legislation (Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996) is collected at local authority level, and published by the Department in the quarterly Statistical Release on Statutory Homelessness, available both in the Library of the House and via the DCLG website:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingresearch/housingstatistics/housingstatisticsby/homelessnessstatistics/publicationshomelessness/

Data collected include the number of households accepted by local housing authorities as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need, and therefore owed a main homelessness duty (to secure that suitable accommodation is available). If a settled home is not immediately available, the authority must secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available and this information is also collected.

During the July to September quarter 2010, 2,630 households were accepted as owed a main homelessness duty in London. At the end of September 2010, there were 36,960 households in temporary accommodation in London.

Information is also collected on rough sleeping. Since 1998, only councils in areas with a known, or suspected, rough sleeping problem were required to conduct an official rough sleeper count, which meant that only 70 councils submitted information to central Government. Figures published in July 2010 showed that under this previous method, on any given night there were 440 rough sleepers in England. However, when the remaining 256 councils provided estimates of the scale of the problem in their areas, this added a further estimated 807 rough sleepers, taking the national total to 1,247 rough sleepers on any given night, of which 317 were in London.

Rough sleeping figures are published by the Department on the DCLG website:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/roughsleepingcount2010

Under new guidance all councils across England will now provide information on rough sleeping. This move follows consultation with homelessness charities and councils and is aimed at getting a clearer picture of the scale of the problem in each area so more targeted support can be provided to some of the most vulnerable in society.

Homelessness: Housing Benefit

Mr Umunna: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he plans to alter the definitions of voluntary and involuntary homelessness as part of his proposed changes to housing benefit. [30999]

Grant Shapps: The Government have no plans to amend the definition of intentional homelessness in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (the homelessness legislation).

Housing: Construction

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what mechanism will be used to calculate the rate at which formula grant is redistributed from local authorities *(a)* in each region and *(b)* at each tier to fund the New Homes Bonus. [30109]

Grant Shapps: The spending review has secured almost £1 billion of funding to support the New Homes Bonus and any funding required above that will be top sliced from formula grant. The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, my right hon. Friend the Member for Brentwood and Ongar (Mr Pickles), announced the Government's formula grant proposals for the next two years on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 679.

Mobile Homes

Mr Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps he plans to take to improve the means of redress for park home residents; and if he will make a statement. [31804]

Grant Shapps: I announced on 14 July that, subject to parliamentary approval, I intended to transfer most dispute resolution under the Mobile Homes Act 1983 from county courts to residential property tribunals. This will provide park home residents with a cheaper, quicker and easier means of redress than currently exists through the courts. The transfer will take place next spring.

I am also looking at what other measures could usefully be taken to help protect park home owners.

Multiple Occupation: Licensing

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many houses in multiple occupation were licensed under *(a)* mandatory, *(b)* selective and *(c)* additional licensing in each local authority area in each year since the introduction of licensing. [31417]

Grant Shapps *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* The collection of data centrally by DCLG on the register of licensed houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) has been suspended and its continued collection is subject to an internal review of all DCLG statistical data collections as part of the new Government's goal of reducing the burdens of data reporting requirements on local government. On 17 December 2010 DCLG published a first draft of the single local government data list and will engage the sector to identify areas where burdens could be reduced further. Definitive numbers of licensed HMOs are available from the registers held by local authorities.

Planning: Referendums

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether his Department has made an estimate of the cost to the public purse of implementing local referendums to approve local neighbourhood plans for a parish of *(a)* 3,000, *(b)* 5,000 and *(c)* 10,000 households. [30693]

Greg Clark: We will be publishing an Impact Assessment on our Neighbourhood Plan proposals in due course which will outline how the changes will increase sustainable development and deliver monetised benefits to local authorities and developers.

Regional Planning and Development: Finance

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects to announce his plans for the future of the Growth Areas, Growth Points and Eco-Towns Grant. [30765]

Grant Shapps: The Growth Fund will not continue into the next spending period, and I refer the right hon. Member to the Local Growth White paper published on 28 October 2010, which sets out a range of policies and incentives to support locally led growth, including eco-development and eco-towns.

I note that the previous Administration cut Growth Fund funding for 2010-11 in a written ministerial statement of 15 December 2009, *Official Report*, column 94WS, and declined to commit to future funding in an answer given on 5 January 2010, *Official Report*, column 219W.

Residential Premises

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many residential premises deemed problematic in each ward of each local authority area were closed in each of the last three years. [31809]

Andrew Stunell: The information requested is not held centrally.

SCOTLAND

Departmental Press Releases

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland on how many occasions his Department has provided embargoed media briefings prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010; in respect of how many such briefings his Department was informed that the embargo had been breached; what steps were taken as a result of each such breach; and on how many occasions his Department has provided media briefings without an embargo prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010. [31909]

David Mundell: Neither the Secretary of State nor I have made an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010.

Higher Education: Finance

Graeme Morrice: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assessment he has made of the likely effect on universities in Scotland of the consequences of implementation of *(a)* the Higher Education (Basic Amount) (England) Regulations 2010 and *(b)* the Higher Education (Higher Amount) (England) Regulations 2010. [32327]

David Mundell: The Secretary of State for Scotland and I are in regular discussion with a range of organisations, such as Universities Scotland and NUS Scotland, about the effect of Government policy on Scotland.

WALES

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent estimate she has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on her Department's annual expenditure. [31175]

Mr David Jones: Officials have considered the change in value added tax and made adjustments in our budget to accommodate the increase.

Welsh Language Schemes

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when her Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses these can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31156]

Mr David Jones: The Wales Office agreed with the Welsh Language Board a revised Welsh Language Scheme for the Department in March 2010.

The scheme is published on the Wales Office website, and it can be found in Welsh at:

http://www.swyddfa.cymru.gov.uk/amdanom-ni/y-cynllun-iaith-gymraeg/

and in English at:

http://www.walesoffice.gov.uk/about/welsh-language-scheme/

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Leader of the House how many staff employed by his Office were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31215]

Sir George Young: The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons joined the Cabinet Office in 2007.

I refer to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office.

Members: Travel

Mr MacShane: To ask the Leader of the House if he will bring forward proposals to make extended travel within the UK available to hon. Members on the same basis as extended travel to Europe. [32095]

Sir George Young: The rules governing extended travel are a matter for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan: Overseas Aid

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the proportion of his Department's aid provided to Afghanistan which has been diverted from its intended purpose in the latest period for which figures are available. [31270]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: DFID aid in Afghanistan is safeguarded as far as possible given the security situation. Money allocated to the Government of Afghanistan is channelled through a multi-donor trust fund managed by the World Bank and monitored by an external agent. It is provided on a reimbursement basis and only released once proof of legitimate expenditure has been provided.

DFID has rigorous systems and procedures in place across all its programmes to ensure effective financial oversight of its funding and to ensure that aid achieves maximum value for money and both reaches and delivers results for its intended recipients. This Government will take the strongest action where such abuse of UK funds is proven. DFID's Counter Fraud Unit takes a robust approach to investigating and pursuing allegations of unintended use.

Africa: Education

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department allocated to the Financial Education Fund in the most recent year for which figures are available; and what plans he has for future funding for financial education and services in developing countries in Africa. [31745]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has allocated £1,257,058 to the Financial Education Fund (FEF) for the 2010-11 financial year.

FEF is using a challenge fund mechanism to test the effectiveness of different approaches to improving consumers' financial capability. Overall, 15 projects are being supported in various African countries including an educational drama programme in Kenya which has so far reached over seven million people, and an initiative for rural young women in Zambia. Over the next year we will evaluate the evidence from FEF, communicate the lessons learned within DFID and to the wider development community, and then explore how these results can support further financial education initiatives in developing countries.

Colombia: Human Rights

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the role of, and assistance provided by, his Department to Colombia in ensuring appropriate action against human rights violations. [31884]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not provide direct assistance to the Government of Colombia. DFID provides assistance through multilaterals and civil society organisations in Colombia. The UK pays particular attention to human rights as part of our bilateral dialogue with the Government of Colombia.

The work of civil society partners is critical for the respect and promotion of human rights across Latin America, particularly in the areas of impunity, land restitution and improved security for human rights defenders. An independent mid-term evaluation of DFID's Latin America Partnership Programme Arrangement in 2010 found examples of:

> "effective social mobilisation of groups that have historically been marginalised, of increasing recognition by duty-bearers of the legitimacy of the rights and interests of these groups, and of reforms to policy and legislation that have been made as a result."

Human rights defenders in Colombia have informed us that visible and ongoing UK and international support continues to help guarantee their security.

Departmental Location

Mr McCann: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether any members of his Department's Management Board are based in East Kilbride. [31128]

Mr Duncan: No member of the Department for International Development's (DFID's) executive management board is based in East Kilbride. Members of the management board visit the DFID office in East Kilbride between once and three times a month and there are frequent video conferences and virtual discussions with staff involving the management board. The most senior member of DFID staff based in East Kilbride is the Director for Value for Money.

Mr McCann: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether he considered the relocation of jobs out of London as part of his Department's contribution to the comprehensive spending review. [31135]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) has two UK headquarters, located in London and East Kilbride. We are transferring 70 posts from our London office to East Kilbride where we have around 500 staff. We will keep under review the potential for further relocations.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31226]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development has no London or UK-based staff paid at a rate equivalent to or below the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available.

Departmental Procurement

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible have taken to comply with the guidance of the Office of Government Commerce on promoting skills through public procurement issued in 2009. [31321]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) implemented a change to its invitation to tender processes in 2009 in response to the Office of Government Commerce publication of guidance on promoting skills through public procurement.

Our standard invitation-to-tender document encourages suppliers to provide training and apprenticeship opportunities in their work force for DFID contracts where it is appropriate to do so, and that they should encourage their sub-contractors to offer such opportunities as appropriate.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31181]

Mr Duncan: Department spending review settlements are set on a tax-inclusive basis, including the increase to the standard rate of value added tax (VAT). The Department for International Development (DFID) is entitled to reclaim the standard rate of VAT when purchasing a service which is included in the "Contracting Out Direction" issued by HM Treasury. Where DFID is unable to reclaim the VAT this will be borne out of existing budgets.

Developing Countries: Health Services

Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with international organisations on user fees and access to health care services in developing countries. [31115]

Mr O'Brien: The Secretary of State has had discussions with international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) about user fees and access to health care services in developing countries. Department for International Development (DFID) officials have been working with all the relevant organisations, including the World Bank, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF, on issues related to user fees and access to health care.

We are specifically supporting WHO to implement the World Health Report on health financing.

Food Retail Industry Challenge Fund

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department *(a)* allocated to the Food Retail Industry Challenge Fund in the most recent year for which figures are available and *(b)* plans to allocate to the fund in each of the next three years. [31746]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has allocated grants totalling £1,837,080 to the Food Retail Industry Challenge Fund for the period 2009-10 to 2012-13. Funds are released when projects achieve agreed milestones. Projects supported to date include bringing new teas from Rwanda and Kenya, coffee from the Democratic Republic of Congo and a chocolate drink from Sao Tome.

Decisions on future funding to the Food Retail Industry Challenge Fund have not yet been made. DFID is currently reviewing all our aid programmes to ensure UK aid is effective, represents value for money for the UK taxpayer and accelerates growth towards the millennium development goals.

Overseas Aid

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to ensure that funds paid to developing nations are spent on the projects to which they have been allocated. [31375]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) has rigorous systems and procedures to ensure effective financial oversight of its funding and to ensure that aid reaches and delivers results for its intended recipients. Where funds are paid direct to governments, we protect them from unintended use by: carefully assessing the risks and ensuring that our assessments are checked by external experts; making sure that governments have a credible reform programme to improve their financial management and reporting systems, and providing technical support to help them do so; and using safeguards to prevent misuse of funds, for example, by ensuring procurement is approved by someone outside national systems, conducting audits of particular sectors, and tracking money from the Ministry of Finance to ensure it gets to the right place.

The UK Government have a zero tolerance approach to corruption, and we will take the strongest action where such abuse of funds is proven. DFID's Counter Fraud Unit takes a robust approach to investigating and pursuing allegations of unintended use. For example DFID has suspended funding to the Kenyan Ministry of Education after an audit report into the use and management of education funds in Kenya found that UK aid could not be accounted for. All unaccounted funds identified in this first audit have now been fully recovered.

USA: Cotton

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effect of US cotton subsidies on farmers in developing countries; and if he will make a statement. [31898]

Mr O'Brien: The UK Government have supported significant research into the impacts of cotton subsidies on African farmers, including US cotton subsidies. These subsidies have a significant negative impact on farmers in developing countries and their removal is a key objective of the UK Government.

We will continue to press the US bilaterally on this issue. However, successful conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) will be the key driver of reform. In 2005, WTO members committed to treat cotton subsidies "ambitiously, expeditiously and specifically" within the DDA. The UK is at the forefront of countries pressing for conclusion in 2011.

Welsh Language

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when his Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses these can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31168]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not have a Welsh Language Scheme but works in consultation with partner organisations, such as the Welsh Assembly, to provide major policy documents in Welsh as and when required.

Yemen: Overseas Aid

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department plans to give to Yemen in aid in *(a)* 2010-11 and *(b)* 2011-12; and to which projects such aid will be allocated. [31281]

Mr Duncan: In 2010-11 the Department for International Development (DFID) has allocated £50 million to Yemen. This has been committed to the following projects.

Social Fund for Development
Social Fund for Development—Cash Transfer Programme
Basic Education Development Project
Secondary Education Development and Girls Access Programme
Maternal and Newborn Health
Justice and Policing
Humanitarian Assistance Programme
International Finance Corporation Private Sector Development.

In June 2010 the Secretary of State for International Development commissioned a review of all DFID's bilateral aid programmes. Funding allocation for 2011-12 will be made after the review has concluded early next year.

Zimbabwe: Health Services

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of *(a)* urban and *(b)* rural health services in Zimbabwe. [31282]

Mr O'Brien: The UK works closely with partners to continually assess the health situation in Zimbabwe. For example, we support a survey every three months that looks at basic infrastructure, staffing, and stocks of essential drugs and commodities in over 1,000 health facilities across the country.

Health services across Zimbabwe, in both urban and rural areas, are inadequate and the country is seriously off track to meet its health related millennium development goals. This is why supporting improvements in health care delivery is a major focus of our work in the country. In Zimbabwe, the number of mothers dying in childbirth has increased four fold since 1990 and more children are dying before their fifth birthday. Doing even more on maternal and child health is a development priority of the coalition Government.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Afghanistan: Christianity

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking in support of the human rights of Christians who have been imprisoned, tortured or persecuted as a consequence of seeking to practise their faith in Afghanistan. [31558]

Alistair Burt: Working with the international community, we continue to monitor the situation of Christians in Afghanistan and to remind the Afghan Government of its duty to abide by its national and international commitments on freedom of religion and belief.

Afghanistan: Corruption

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of progress in reducing the level of corruption in Afghanistan since 2008. [31278]

Alistair Burt: Corruption remains a serious concern for the Afghan Government, Afghan citizens and the international community. It hampers socio-economic development and undermines the legitimacy of the Afghan Government and their ability to deliver services to the Afghan people.

Since 2008, the Afghan Government have committed to a number of steps to tackle corruption and build independent institutions to monitor and drive progress in this area. We and our international partners have welcomed these commitments. Progress to date has been slower than we would like with only partial implementation in some areas. We continue to press the Afghan Government to intensify their efforts. We also continue to provide practical support on anti-corruption.

Afghanistan: Females

Alison McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to prevent *(a)* forced marriage, *(b)* enslavement and *(c)* violence against women in Afghanistan. [31389]

Alistair Burt: We continue to encourage the Afghan Government to implement the human rights legislation that it has committed to, including the law on the elimination of violence against women.

The UK's national action plan on women, peace and security which identifies how UK defence, diplomacy and development work can empower and protect women in conflict situations includes a specific section on our efforts in Afghanistan. One of our objectives is to strengthen and protect women's rights and to promote access to effective remedy of violations of these rights.

Aung San Suu Kyi

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with Aung San Suu Kyi; and if he will make a statement. [31964]

Mr Jeremy Browne: Aung San Suu Kyi's release from house arrest was long overdue and warmly welcomed by the Government. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister spoke to her on 15 November and assured her of the Government's support. Our ambassador to Rangoon has met her frequently in the month since her release, most recently on 15 December. The Government condemn attempts by the military regime to force the dissolution of the National League for Democracy (NLD). The huge number of Burmese people who greeted Aung San Suu Kyi's release on the streets of Rangoon demonstrate that the NLD continue to have widespread popular appeal. The Government urge the military regime to work with all democratic and ethnic groups towards achieving national reconciliation.

Burma: Politics and Government

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent steps he has taken to press the Government of Burma to grant political freedoms to Burmese citizens. [31954]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The Government remain deeply concerned about the actions of the military regime, which continues to deny fundamental freedoms to the people of Burma. The UK played a leading role at the Asia-Europe summit in May, where the EU pressed the Burmese Foreign Minister to respect human rights. These issues have also been raised with Burma's regional neighbours in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), on my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's visits to India and China and in human rights bodies including most recently the UN General Assembly, where the EU secured a strongly-worded resolution which catalogued the continuing human rights abuses in Burma.

Official Hospitality: Christmas

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans his Department has to *(a)* host Christmas parties and *(b)* purchase Christmas trees and decorations; and what estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on such activities in 2010-11. [30702]

Alistair Burt: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary will be hosting a Christmas reception for diplomatic, parliamentary, media and other contacts. This event replaces two events held previously. This year we expect the cost of the event will be £9,823. Last year the cost was more than £16,000.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not purchased any Christmas trees or decorations in 2010-11. Three Christmas trees have been donated to the office by Facilities Management Client Unit (FMCU) contractors (Compass, Interserve and G4S).

The Foreign and Commonwealth office will be holding a Christmas party for staff who will have to purchase tickets to attend. £3,600 from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office budget has been allocated for the party. This will meet various set-up costs (such as hire of tables and chairs and a public address system). Ticket sales will meet the costs of food and drink. Public funds will not be used to fund the purchase of food or drink.

Conflict Prevention

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make arrangements to discuss with Parliamentarians the development of his Department's Building Stability Overseas strategy. [31810]

Mr Bellingham: Following the commitment made in Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), the Government will publish a Building Stability Overseas Strategy (BSOS) by spring 2011. The National Security Strategy (NSS) makes clear our commitment to a dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders to build a shared understanding of the security challenges we face and what we are doing and need to do to tackle them. Officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence and Department for International Department are currently planning detailed consultations, to be held early in the new year to ensure that the Building Stability Overseas Strategy is developed with key partners, including parliamentarians.

Denmark: Dolphins

Margot James: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has made recent representations to his Danish counterpart on dolphin hunting. [30874]

Mr Lidington: The Government are aware of the strength of feeling in the UK about the killing of pilot whales (a term which also includes Calderon dolphins) in the Faroe Islands. Our position on the hunting of cetaceans (marine mammals) is clear in that we support the International Whaling Commission (IWC) moratorium on commercial whaling and oppose all forms of cetacean hunts, other than limited whaling operations by indigenous people for subsistence purposes.

I have not yet had any contact with my Danish counterparts on this issue. However, we raise the issue of whale hunting in the Faroe Islands with Denmark on a regular basis at official level. This was discussed at the annual meeting of the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas in October, at which Denmark was represented. At this meeting, the UK raised concerns over the increasing frequency and diversity of these hunts.

We will continue to make our opposition to whaling known to Denmark at every appropriate opportunity. We will argue that the actions of the Faroe Islands undermine the credibility of the IWC as an effective organisation for the conservation of cetaceans worldwide.

Departmental Libraries

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what expenditure his Department incurred on the employment of *(a)* historians and *(b)* librarians in each of the last 13 years; and if he will make a statement. [30682]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not maintain a central record of the expenditure on previous historian and librarian staff and it would incur disproportionate cost to establish such historical expenditure for each of the last 13 years from relevant staff file records.

The FCO currently employs a historians team of seven full-time staff (including two members of staff on secondment from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the National Archives) and three part-time staff, at a total average salary cost in 2010-11 of £324,309. An e-library service has been provided to staff since the closure of the FCO library in March 2008. Three full-time staff are currently employed to support the e-library service, at a total average salary cost in 2010-11 of £94,058.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements are in place for his Department's officials to access his Department's historical records; in what format such records are made available to his Department's staff; and if he will make a statement. [30683]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) selects and transfers records to The National Archives (TNA) after 30 years. Some records are retained in the FCO archive (under the provisions of the Public Records Act) and others are held closed at TNA (under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act).

Arrangements are in place with the TNA whereby the FCO can order back any material required by FCO officials, both closed and open records. Retained records are also available for FCO officials whenever required.

Any records currently requested from TNA will be in paper format as the FCO has not yet transferred any electronic records. This also applies to FCO records which are currently retained by the Department.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what analysis was undertaken of the merits of his Department's historical library prior to the decision to close it. [30701]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)'s historical library collection was transferred to Kings College London in 2007 following an internal review conducted in 2003, the establishment of an Advisory Committee in 2006 which oversaw a tender exercise to assess the merits of the bids received, and the laying of a Departmental Minute before both Houses of Parliament regarding the "gift" of the FCO historical collection to Kings College London. The FCO and King's College London set up a limited company—in effect a charitable trust—to hold title to the collection. The decision to close the physical library was taken in 2007 following a review conducted by external consultants. Consequently the remaining 20,000 volumes in the physical library were transferred to Kings College London and the physical library closed in March 2008. The FCO is confident that Kings College London is proving to be an excellent custodian of the historical library especially as it is now the most heavily used of King's special collections and has never before been made accessible to the public.

Departmental Pay

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the highest annual salary his Department paid in each of the last five years was. [28556]

Alistair Burt: In each of the last five years the highest annual salary paid by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office did not exceed £190,000.

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK-based staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31223]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not employ any staff at a rate below the London living wage in its London offices.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Matthew Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to which local newspapers his Department had a subscription between June 2007 and May 2010; on what date each such subscription started; and what the cost to the public purse was of such subscriptions. [24430]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not hold the information in the format requested and to do so could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Globally, the FCO has spent the following, per financial year, on newspaper and magazines.

	£
2007-08	820,000
2008-09	382,000
2009-10	451,000
2010-11 (April and May)	59,944

Mr Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible spent on press cuttings services in each of the last 12 months. [25489]

Alistair Burt: Spend by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the British Council on press cutting services for each of the last 12 months is listed in the following table.

		£ (Excluding VAT)
	FCO	*British Council*
2009		
November	13,730	2,443
December	13,307	2,236
2010		
January	12,987	2,120
February	11,164	2,766
March	14,674	2,653
April	10,327	2,921
May	10,452	1,855
June	10,819	1,765
July	10,714	1,636
August	9,024	1,813
September	8,479	1,926
October	8,195	1,920

The FCO is also obliged to purchase an annual licence fee from the Newspaper Licensing Agency (NLA) in order to deliver electronic press cuttings. In 2010-11, this cost £70,755 (excluding VAT). The FCO does not pay for this by month but makes an annual payment each year, which runs from 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2010. Prior to 2007, the FCO had a paper cuttings service. When we moved to the more environmentally friendly digital service, the NLA increased its fee as the digital information can now be provided across the whole of the FCO's worldwide network rather than just in the UK.

For the period 1 November 2009 to 31 October 2010, the British Council spent £17,251 (excluding VAT) on NLA payments. The FCO's other non-departmental public bodies did not spend anything on press cutting services during this period.

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much his Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28142]

Alistair Burt: Spend by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) on press cutting services for the last seven years is listed in the following table.

		£
	Press cutting services	*Newspaper Licensing Agency*
April 2004 to March 2005	288,943	1,905
April 2005 to March 2006	270,011	1,880
April 2006 to March 2007	314,049	2,044
April 2007 to March 2008	350,658	6,176
April 2008 to March 2009	257,338	28,243
April 2009 to March 2010	213,925	71,822
April 2010 to October 2010	68,012	70,755

We cannot separate costs prior to 2004 without incurring disproportionate costs. The FCO is also obliged to purchase an annual licence fee from the Newspaper Licensing Agency (NLA) in order to deliver electronic press cuttings. Prior to 2007, the FCO had a paper cuttings service. When we moved to the more environmentally friendly digital service, the NLA increased its fee as the digital information can now be provided across the whole of the FCO's worldwide network rather than just in the UK.

Departmental Procurement

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible have taken to comply with the Guidance of the Office of Government Commerce on promoting skills through public procurement issued in 2009. [31329]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) incorporated the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) guidance document 'Promoting Skills through Public Procurement' into its Procurement Guidance and uses FCO UK-based construction procurement to promote the use of apprentices as part of supplier work forces.

FCO Services, a trading fund of the FCO, also supports the OGC guidance. The nature of the work means that fully qualified staff are sent to locations overseas which limits the scope for suppliers' apprentices. However, FCO Services, as a supplier of the FCO currently has 40 apprentices.

Wilton Park and non-departmental public bodies such as the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and the Great Britain China Centre are small organisations that do not undertake procurement of this nature. The British Council follows the guidance but rarely enters into construction contracts in the UK.

EU Law

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by his Department; and what estimate he has made of the cost of each such transposition. [27495]

Mr Lidington: No EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). Therefore, the FCO has made no estimate of the cost of transposition.

Falkland Islands: Offshore Industry

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on progress on exploration of oil and gas reserves in Falkland Islands territorial waters; and what assessment he has made of any likely date for commencement of commercial exploitation. [31929]

Mr Jeremy Browne: Hydrocarbons exploration resumed in Falkland Islands waters in February 2010. Five wells have so far been drilled. Rockhopper Exploration announced an oil discovery in their Sea Lion prospect in the North Falklands Basin on 6 May 2010. However, thus far, no companies have announced hydrocarbons finds in commercially viable quantities. We will need to wait for the results of the continuing exploration before we can make any assessment about long-term prospects for the industry.

Foreign Nationals: Honours

Henry Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will take steps to enable UK honours to be awarded in recognition of voluntary work in the local community to non-British or Commonwealth citizens who are resident in the UK. [31576]

Mr Bellingham: Substantive UK honours can be awarded to citizens of countries where Her Majesty The Queen is Head of State (UK Realms). Dual nationals (one of which is the UK) resident in the UK are eligible for substantive awards.

Non-British and non-Realm Commonwealth nationals are eligible for honorary awards. Clearance has to be sought from the respective foreign government before an award is made. Honorary awards are not included in the birthday and new year honours lists but are published on the Foreign and Commonwealth website as and when they are awarded.

Ilois: Resettlement

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he expects the former inhabitants of the Chagos Islands to settle permanently in the British Indian Overseas Territory. [31931]

Mr Bellingham: The Government are continuing to defend the claims for resettlement and further compensation which the Chagos Islanders have brought to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. This is because we believe the arguments against allowing resettlement on the grounds of feasibility and defence security are clear and compelling. Nor do we see the case for compensation as this has already been paid in full and final settlement of all claims. Both of these issues have already been decided by the UK courts.

Iran: Baha'i Faith

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the detention of Jinous Sobhani in Iran. [31742]

Alistair Burt: I am aware of the case of Jinous Sobhani, reportedly sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Iran. I have not received any recent reports from the Iranian authorities on her case, but have asked my officials to investigate her situation. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I have repeatedly expressed our concern at the human rights situation in Iran. Last week, our ambassador in Tehran raised our concerns about the fate of human rights defenders directly with the Iranian authorities.

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the imprisonment of *(a)* Haleh Rouhi, *(b)* Sasan Taqva and *(c)* Raha Sabet in Iran. [31743]

Alistair Burt: I am aware of reports that Haleh Rouhi, Sasan Taqva and Raha Sabet, three Baha'is, have been detained in Shiraz in Iran. I have not received any recent report from the Iranian authorities on their cases, but have asked my officials to investigate their situation. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I have repeatedly expressed our concern at the situation of the Baha'i community in Iran, and urged the Government of Iran to cease all harassment of all religious groups.

Mrs Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Iranian government on the imprisonment of the Baha'i leaders Mrs Fariba Kamalabadi, Mr Jamaloddin Khanjani, Mr Afif Naimi, Mr Saeid Rezaie, Mrs Mahvash Sabet, Mr Behrouz Tavakkoli and Mr Vahid Tizfahm. [31907]

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the government of Iran on the imprisonment in Iran of leaders of the Baha'i faith. [31741]

Alistair Burt: I remain deeply concerned about the ongoing detention of seven leaders of the Baha'i faith in Iran. I raised their cases with the Iranian ambassador in London immediately following their sentencing to 20 years in prison in August. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary also highlighted their plight in a statement, expressing our concerns about the serious flaws in due process in this case and describing the sentence as unacceptable. I highlighted our concerns again in a statement in November. We continue to call on the Government of Iran to urgently review their case, and to ensure that no-one in Iran faces imprisonment simply for practising their faith.

Iran: Capital Punishment

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Iranian Government on the stoning for adultery of *(a)* Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani and *(b)* other women. [31586]

Alistair Burt: I have repeatedly raised the plight of Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani with the Iranian authorities, as have my officials in Tehran and London. We have expressed our concern at the serious flaws in her case, including lack of proper legal representation, the use of televised confessions and lack of transparency in the legal process. We have also expressed our complete opposition to the implementation of the death penalty in any form and in any circumstances, and in particular to the horrific punishment of stoning. We continue to urge the Iranian authorities to ensure her case is properly conducted in line with due process, and that the death penalty is not applied in any form.

Iran: North Korea

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received of the level of *(a)* military and *(b)* nuclear co-operation between Iran and North Korea; and if he will make a statement. [31716]

Alistair Burt: The UK remains deeply concerned by both Iran's and North Korea's nuclear programmes. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) network of proliferation activities, including to countries such as Iran, are a threat to regional and international security. The UN Panel of Experts to the 1718 Sanctions Committee published a midterm report in November 2010, which indicated that Iran and the DPRK were co-operating in the development of ballistic missiles.

We strongly support the tough sanctions imposed by UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874, which are designed to curb the range of weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms related proliferation activities undertaken by the DPRK. UN Security Council Resolution 1929 also requires countries to take steps to ensure that shipments of weapons and proliferation sensitive goods en route to Iran are stopped. We continue to work closely with international partners to ensure that these measures are robustly implemented.

Iran: Nuclear Weapons

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what steps he *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take in the next two years to ensure that shipments of illegal weapons do not reach Iran; what discussions he has had with his UN counterparts on such issues; what has been the outcome of such discussions; and if he will make a statement; [31717]

(2) what steps he has taken to prevent Iran from contravening the provisions of UN Security Council Resolutions; and if he will make a statement. [31721]

Alistair Burt: The UK was a key player in securing UN Security Council Resolution 1929 in June 2010 which imposed strong sanctions on Iran. These include the requirement for all states to ensure that shipments of weapons and proliferation sensitive goods to Iran are stopped. We are committed to implementing these sanctions robustly and are working closely with our international partners and through the 1737 Sanctions Committee to this end:

http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1737/index.shtml

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received from the International Atomic Energy Agency on any development of atomic weapons by Iran; what discussions he had at the United Nations on this issue since September 2010; and if he will make a statement. [R] [31718]

Alistair Burt: The most recent report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General was issued on 23 November 2010. The report sets out the key concerns of the IAEA about Iran's nuclear intentions and reiterates that there has been no Iranian co-operation with the IAEA on "possible military dimensions" to Iran's programme since August 2008. The agency makes clear that it

> 'remains concerned about the possible existence in Iran of past or current undisclosed nuclear related activities, involving military related organizations, including activities relating to the development of a payload for a missile.'

The UK discusses these issues regularly in the UN 1737 Sanctions Committee.

http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1737/index.shtml

Iraq: Iran

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what report he has received on the observation of the human rights of Iranian refugees detained in Camp Ashraf. [31376]

Alistair Burt: We have received reports from the United Nations and the Government of Iraq on the situation in Camp Ashraf in recent weeks. The United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq have reported that the Iraqi Government have refused to allow some items such as stationery, beds and bicycles into the camp. However the Iraqi army, present inside the camp, have told us that food, water and medical supplies have been allowed to enter. Within the camp there is a hospital to which the residents have access.

The Iraqi Government have given assurances to us that no Ashraf residents will be forcibly transferred to a country where they have reason to fear persecution, or where substantial grounds exist to believe they would be tortured.

We continue to encourage both sides to engage in constructive dialogue that can lead to a lasting resolution to the residents' current situation.

Iraq: Politics and Government

Julian Sturdy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the political and security situation in Iraq. [32212]

Alistair Burt: The political situation in Iraq has been largely uncertain since the March 2010 elections. However, the appointments on 11 November 2010 of the Speaker of the Council of Representatives Usama al Nujaifi, President Jalal Talabani and Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki constitute an important step towards stability. President Talabani has formally invited Prime Minister Maliki to form a Government. We have urged the Iraqis to complete this process swiftly and focus its attention on the multiple challenges facing Iraq, including the security situation.

The security situation in Iraq remains a concern. But despite continued terrorist attacks, it is important not to lose sight of the progress that Iraq has made. There remain those opposed to progress and intent on stirring up sectarian tension, but the March 2010 elections and the recent progress towards Government formation have demonstrated the determination of the Iraqi people to follow the path of dialogue and democracy over violence and destruction.

Ivory Coast: Elections

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effects on regional peace and stability of the recent election dispute in Ivory Coast. [31595]

Mr Bellingham: As well as our concern for the internal stability of Cote d'Ivoire as a result of the current political crisis, there are risks to the wider region. There are large communities of Burkinabe and Malian nationals living in Cote d'Ivoire. There is a possibility that there would be a large flow of refugees to those countries should the current situation in Cote d'Ivoire deteriorate into widespread conflict. The Liberian authorities have also expressed concern that former rebels might seek to become involved in the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. The British Government will continue to stay in close touch with the governments of the region as well as the Economic Community of West African States to monitor regional concerns.

Lebanon: Peacekeeping Operations

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of *(a)* the security situation in southern Lebanon and *(b)* the role of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon in maintaining peace and security in Southern Lebanon. [31596]

Alistair Burt: The situation in southern Lebanon remains calm since the border clash on 3 August. We continue to call on all parties to comply with United Nations Security Council Resolution UNSCR 1701, which calls for full respect by Israel for Lebanon's territorial integrity, and the disarmament of Hezbollah and other militias. We continue to work with Lebanon, regional and international partners to see UNSCR 1701 implemented.

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) continues to play a critical role in contributing to the peace and stability in southern Lebanon, as demonstrated by their actions to prevent the border clashes between the Lebanese armed forces and Israeli defence forces on 3 August 2010 from escalating.

Middle East: Peace Negotiations

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent steps he has taken with his international counterparts to encourage Hamas to *(a)* accept the Quartet Principles and *(b)* join the peace negotiation process; what response he has received to such steps from Hamas; and if he will make a statement. [31714]

Alistair Burt: I refer my hon. Friend to my response of 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 77W.

Hamas' ideology of violence directly undermines prospects for peace in the region. We will continue to call on Hamas, with international partners, to take immediate and concrete steps towards the Quartet principles and to release Gilad Shalit unconditionally.

Recent statements from Hamas show no signs that it is moving in this direction.

Nagorno Karabakh

Mr Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on the status of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and the adjacent regions of Agdam, Kelbecer, Qubadli, Fizuli, Cerbrayil, Zengilan and Lacin; and if he will make a statement. [30294]

Mr Lidington: The UK does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. The future status of Nagorno-Karabakh and the security of the seven named regions are vital questions that Armenia and Azerbaijan must address as part of finding a peaceful settlement to this conflict. The UK continues to encourage both parties to make the necessary political compromises in order to achieve this. The UK further supports the efforts of the Minsk Group to deliver such a settlement on the basis of international norms and principles.

North East England

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which Ministers of his Department have visited the North East since their appointment; and what the *(a)* date and *(b)* purpose was of each such visit. [31790]

Alistair Burt: No Ministers have visited the North East of England since their appointment to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office this year.

Office of UK Permanent Representative to EU

Mr Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date the contract of employment of the UK Permanent Representative to the EU will come up for renewal. [30916]

Alistair Burt: The UK Permanent Representative to the EU is an established member of HM Diplomatic Service and, as such, has a permanent contract of employment with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The current Permanent Representative's posting is scheduled to last for four years from 2007. But a number of factors, such as the need to ensure continuity and the availability of any replacement, could affect the exact timing of their departure.

Public Expenditure

David Mowat: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what his Department's capital expenditure per head was in *(a)* London and *(b)* the North West in each of the last five years; [21457]

(2) how much and what proportion of his Department's capital expenditure was allocated to *(a)* London and *(b)* the north-west in each of the last five financial years. [21467]

Alistair Burt: The vast majority of capital expenditure by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) occurs outside the United Kingdom in order to support our global network of more than 250 posts overseas. These funds help ensure that our staff operate effectively and safely around the world.

Her Majesty's Treasury produced a Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses Command Paper (PESA 2010, CM 7890) earlier this year which is available at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pesa_2010_complete.pdf

According to the methodology used in that paper (which allocates departmental spending to regions based on who benefits from that spending, rather than where the spending takes place), per capita capital spending by the wider FCO family, including the BBC World Service but excluding the British Council in the financial years 2005-06 to 2009-10 was calculated as £0.10, £0.09, £0.11, £0.05, and £0.06 in both London and the north-west.

On the same basis, the proportion of overall capital FCO spend in London in the financial years 2005-06 to 2009-10 was successively 0.5%, 0.5%, 0.4%, 0.2%, and 0.2%. In the north-west, it was 0.5%, 0.4%, 0.4%, 0.2% and 0.2%.

Russia: Human Rights

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of *(a)* levels of (i) press freedom and (ii) freedom of association and *(b)* observance of the right of assembly in the Russian Federation. [31084]

Mr Lidington: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed these issues with civil society groups during his visit to Moscow in October 2010. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office continues to monitor these issues closely.

Freedom of assembly and strong, independent media and civil society are essential to foster and protect democratic freedoms in Russia, as elsewhere.

We will continue to raise these issues with Russia, both in our bilateral contacts and with our EU partners.

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the level of respect for human rights in the Russian Federation. [31085]

Mr Lidington: During his visit to Moscow in October 2010 my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed human rights issues with Russian non-governmental organisations and the Russian Government. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office assesses the human rights situation in the Russian Federation on an ongoing basis. Our view remains as set out in the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister of State on 19 July 2010, *Official Report*, column 62W, to the hon. Member for Ilford South (Mike Gapes).

Russia: Prisoners

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the government of the Russian Federation on the case of Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Platon Lebedev. [31311]

Mr Lidington: The Government are closely watching developments in the case of Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Platon Lebedev, and have noted the decision of the court to postpone the opening of the verdict reading until 27 December 2010. It is not for the Government to comment on ongoing judicial processes. However, we have consistently stressed to the Russian authorities the importance of fair and impartial trials, including through the EU and during our annual bilateral human rights dialogue.

South America: Diplomatic Service

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* UK-based and *(b)* locally-employed staff his Department employs in its embassy in (i) Lima, (ii) Bogota, (iii) Buenos Aires, (iv) Santiago de Chile, (v) La Paz, (vi) Mexico City and (vii) Caracas. [31212]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office employs approximately 45 staff in the British embassy in Lima, 80 staff in the British embassy in Bogota, 65 staff in the British embassy in Buenos Aires, 55 staff in the British embassy in Santiago, 25 staff in the British embassy in La Paz, 110 staff in the British embassy in Mexico City and 50 staff in the British embassy in Caracas. These figures include UK-based civil servants and locally employed staff. For operational and security reasons, we cannot provide a more detailed breakdown.

Sri Lanka: Politics and Government

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of recent reports that the Sri Lankan government has considered banning the Tamil version of that country's national anthem. [31579]

Alistair Burt: The Sri Lankan Government has announced that it would adhere to the constitutional status of the national anthem. According to the Sri Lankan constitution: the national anthem of the Republic of Sri Lanka shall be "Sri Lanka Matha". This is the Sinhalese version. It is unclear how this affects the Tamil version.

We regularly talk to the Sri Lankan Government on minority issues and the necessity to protect the rights of the minorities. We continue to urge them to take forward national reconciliation through a fully inclusive political process that addresses the underlying causes of the conflict.

Sri Lanka: State Visits

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost to the public purse was of the recent visit to the UK of the President of Sri Lanka. [30081]

Alistair Burt: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice (Nick Herbert) gave him on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 547W.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office incurred no costs due to the President's visit.

Sudan: Referendums

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had on ensuring a peaceful referendum in South Sudan and Abyei in January 2011. [31151]

Mr Bellingham: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary led discussions on Sudan at a special session of the United Nations Security Council on 16 November 2010. He also participated in a discussion of Sudan at the European Foreign Affairs Council on 13 December 2010. He has raised the issue of Sudan with other international and regional contacts. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary spoke to Vice President Taha on 13 December 2010. I spoke to Vice President Kiir on 5 December 2010.

In all these discussions, we have stressed the need for the Southern Referendum to go ahead as scheduled on 9 January 2011 and our long-term commitment to stability and security in both Northern and Southern Sudan, whatever its outcome. We support the work of Thabo Mbeki as he hosts talks between North and South under African Union/United Nations auspices to discuss the Abyei region and wider Comprehensive Peace Agreement issues.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the security situation in southern Sudan in advance of the planned referendum in January 2011. [31594]

Mr Bellingham: The security situation in Sudan is of serious concern, particularly along the north/south border. The Sudanese armed forces have targeted the Darfuri rebel group, the Justice and Equality Movement, across the border in Southern Sudan. Tensions are particularly high in Abyei. The situation in Darfur also remains tense, making humanitarian access difficult. We call on all parties to refrain from violence.

Turkey: EU Enlargement

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of progress on the EU accession negotiations involving Turkey. [31335]

Mr Lidington: Turkey has made good progress this year on its accession process, with the September constitutional reform package addressing a number of accession priorities. The General Affairs Council on 14 December welcomed Turkey's continued commitment to the negotiation process and the political reform agenda. Turkey has opened 13 of the 35 accession chapters and has provisionally closed one chapter. Turkey faces challenges to its accession process as a result of its failure to open its ports to Cyprus and in the context of the wider Cyprus problem.

Uganda: Homosexuality

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Ugandan government on the Anti-Homosexuality Bill. [31682]

Mr Bellingham: Our high commission in Kampala have taken every appropriate opportunity to engage the Ugandan Government, including the Prime Minister and other Ministers, on this issue and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights in Uganda more generally. We also supported a formal démarche by EU member states to the Ugandan Foreign Minister, and are continuing to raise our concerns with the Ugandan authorities.

The British Government are opposed to any actions that have a negative impact on the human rights of Ugandans. This includes the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, tabled by a private Member, which would further criminalise homosexuality if passed into law.

TREASURY

Bank Levy

Mr Bain: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the amount of revenue which would accrue to the Exchequer as a result of setting the bank balance sheet levy applicable to assets over £20 billion at 0.075% in *(a)* 2010-11, *(b)* 2011-12, *(c)* 2012-13, *(d)* 2013-14, *(e)* 2014-15 and *(f)* 2015-16. [31004]

Mr Gauke: Setting the rate of the Bank Levy at 0.075% from 2011 onwards produces estimated yields of £1.9 billion for 2011-12 and £2.5 billion for 2012-13. These estimates are made on the same basis as the updated costings published in the Tax Information and Impacts Note (TIIN) and are not certified by the Office for Budget Responsibility. These estimates have not taken account of any behavioural effect which might result from such a change to the rate. The yield figures for 2013-14 onwards are the same as those published in the TIIN.

Cheques: Rural Areas

Alun Cairns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effects on *(a)* elderly people and *(b)* those living in rural areas of the withdrawal of cheques. [32190]

Mr Hoban: I refer my hon. Friend to my letter of 10 December 2010 to all Members of the House setting out the Government's position on cheques.

Consumer Prices Index

Rachel Reeves: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has considered the merits of changing the methodology for the calculation of the consumer prices index to take account of changes in the level of *(a)* owner-occupied housing costs, *(b)* council tax, *(c)* the television licence fee and *(d)* motor vehicle excise duty. [31506]

Justine Greening: The coverage and classification of the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) are based on the international classification system for household consumption expenditures, which recommends certain transactions such as taxes, other transfers, or capital and financial transactions should be excluded from the CPI index. The exclusions include council tax, vehicle excise duty and television licence fees. More information on the CPI is available at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_economy/CPI_Technical_manual-2010.pdf

For owner-occupied housing costs, the Chancellor has asked the Governor of the Bank of England for his views on how the process to include housing costs into the CPI can be accelerated. The independent Office for National Statistics (ONS), along with the national statistical offices of other European member states are working with the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), to assess the most appropriate approach for including an index of owner-occupier housing costs in the CPI in the future. Alongside this international agenda the CPI Advisory Committee, which is considering the issue of housing costs in the CPI, recommended to the UK Statistics Authority in its annual report on 3 November that ONS should develop housing cost indices using the net acquisitions and rental equivalence approaches.

Corporation Tax

Mike Freer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effect on corporation tax receipts of the removal of the salary sacrifice concession for travel and subsistence from assessments of business compliance with the national minimum wage. [28036]

Mr Gauke: There is no salary sacrifice concession for travel and subsistence. Consequently no assessment has been made of the effect on corporation tax receipts of the removal of such a concession.

Debts: Advisory Services

Tracey Crouch: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the merits of establishing a statutory licensing scheme for debt management companies. [30526]

Mr Davey: I have been asked to reply.

All who provide debt management services are required to be licensed under the Consumer Credit Act 1974. Where the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has evidence of unfair practices, action can be taken to refuse or revoke or place conditions on the consumer credit licence of those concerned.

Following a review of compliance with its Debt Management Guidance, in September 2010 the OFT warned 129 debt management firms about identified non-compliant business practices. The firms were instructed to produce independently audited evidence confirming action that they have taken to address the identified areas of non compliance by the middle of December, and of the 129 firms, approximately 32 have indicated that they will surrender their licences, 87 firms have agreed to comply and the OFT have initiated revocation action against 10 traders, but these figures may well change.

Tracey Crouch: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will assess the merits of setting minimum standards for the provision of debt advisory services. [30527]

Mr Davey: I have been asked to reply.

All who provide debt advisory services are required to be licensed by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) under the Consumer Credit Act 1974. The OFT's Debt Management Guidance (which was issued in 2001 and updated in September 2008) sets out minimum standards for debt management companies in the marketing of their services, pre-contract contact, the prevision of pre-contract information, contract terms, advice and the nature of the debt management service provided. Work to update the guidance to make sure the guidance addresses new developments in the market is underway and will be the subject of a public consultation in early 2011.

Following a review of compliance with its debt management guidance, significant action was taken by the OFT in September 2010 to warn 129 debt management firms about identified non-compliant business practices, including the provision of poor quality debt advice and information.

Tracey Crouch: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what quality standards his Department has established for the debt management industry to ensure that advice offered to prospective consumers of debt management services is in their best interests. [30528]

Mr Davey: I have been asked to reply.

All who provide debt management services are required to be licensed under the Consumer Credit Act 1974. The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has a duty to ensure that applicants for licences are fit to engage in the activities for which they wish to be licensed, and to monitor the continuing fitness of those to whom licences have been granted. The OFT's Debt Management Guidance sets out minimum standards for debt management companies in the marketing of their services, pre-contract contact, the provision of pre-contract information, contract terms, advice and the nature of the debt management service provided. Where the OFT has evidence of unfair practices, action can be taken to refuse or revoke or place conditions on the consumer credit licence of those concerned.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30752]

Mr Gauke: In 2009-10 HM Treasury processed 8,501 invoices on behalf of the Treasury Group which comprises HM Treasury, the Debt Management Office and the Asset Protection Agency.

Departmental Pay

Priti Patel: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what allowances and payments in addition to salary were available to officials in his Department and its non-departmental public bodies in each year since 1997; and what the monetary value was of payments and allowances of each type in each such year. [18763]

Mr Gauke: Details of allowances paid since 2005-08 are shown in the following table. Information on allowances paid in earlier years is not available within the disproportionate costs threshold. Rates of allowances will be frozen in line with the announced two year freeze in basic pay.

£000

Allowance	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Procurement	—	1	16	21	25
Temporary duties	—	—	2	0	—
Cost of living (overseas)	46	43	44	63	65
Hardship (low quality overseas accommodation)	1	—	—	—	—
Fast stream	1	5	11	15	5
Other(non pensionable)	3	—	—	—	—
Additional performance	—	—	56	88	50
Bursary (professional training)	—	1	5	—	—
Language	—	—	10	9	9
Responsibility	16	20	40	106	205
Press Office	39	40	29	48	49
Private Secretary	170	196	216	193	225
Miscellaneous	4	7	18	28	18
On call and stand by		—	—	0	0
Typing proficiency	0	0	1	1	1
Meals (for working after 8pm)	8	9	10	11	12
Housing cost	10	7	9	3	3
Excess rent (overseas)	9	—			—
London (for senior civil service band 1 staff)	184	175	147	150	167
Internal audit	14	18	15	14	14
Accountancy	36	37	65	63	66
Clothing	5	1	2	1	—
Indirect representation (overseas)	5	1	—		
Vehicle	2	1	2	—	—

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31222]

Justine Greening: As at the end November, there were no staff employed by HM Treasury who were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31176]

Mr Gauke: The effect of the forthcoming VAT increase has been taken into account for departmental budgets as defined in the spending review.

Financial Services: VAT

Ian Lucas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will assess the effects on the level of value added tax receipts of the change from payment of independent financial advisers by commission to payment by fees from 2013. [31106]

Mr Gauke: The implications of this change, and across all taxes, are being considered by a Treasury Working Group. It is too early to assess any potential effect on VAT receipts.

Manpower

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many members of staff worked for his Department on the most recent date for which figures are available. [31272]

Mr Gauke: Staffing figures are published annually in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts. The total number of members of staff (full time equivalents) at 31 March 2010 was 1,350, as reported in the Annual Resource Accounts 2009-10.

Members: Correspondence

Mr Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he plans to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Warley of 19 October 2010 on behalf of Mr York on beer taxation. [31700]

Justine Greening: I have replied to the right hon. Member.

Mortgage Express and Bradford and Bingley: Complaints

Mr Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints his Department received on *(a)* Mortgage Express and *(b)* Bradford and Bingley in the latest period in which figures are available. [31989]

Mr Hoban: HM Treasury received approximately 2,017 letters concerning Bradford and Bingley and Mortgage Express between 2003 and December 2010.

The Department classifies cases based on their primary subject. The Department has not separately identified letters concerning Mortgage Express from those concerning Bradford and Bingley as Mortgage Express was a wholly owned subsidiary of Bradford and Bingley. Similarly this is an approximate figure as other letters may have included complaints about Bradford and Bingley but have been categorised under their primary subject.

Railways: Fares

Zac Goldsmith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 613W, on budgets: environmental protection, what assessment his Department made of the environmental impact of the implementation of the proposal in the Spending Review to increase the cap on regulated rail fares to three per cent. above the retail price index for three years from 2012. [26275]

Mrs Villiers: I have been asked to reply.

In my answer of 10 November, *Official Report*, column 334W, I explained the Department for Transport has not made a detailed estimate of the likely effects of increases in rail fares on transport emissions. Although the announced fare increases may encourage some limited reduction in the rate of growth of rail travel, the overall impact on carbon and air quality emissions is likely to be small.

Research and Development Tax Credit

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has for the future of the research and development tax credit. [31309]

Mr Gauke *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: As a part of the plans for corporate tax reform, the Government published a consultation on the support R and D tax credits provide for innovation, including the proposals of the Dyson Review on 29 November 2010. The closing date for responses is 22 February 2011.

Tax Allowances: Aggregates

Ms Ritchie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects to submit to the European Commission evidence on behalf of Northern Ireland representatives of the quarry industry in relation to the reintroduction of the aggregates credit relief scheme. [31563]

Mr Gauke: Since the European General Court judgment in September which annulled state aid approval for the aggregates levy credit scheme in Northern Ireland, officials have been engaging with the European Commission to pursue reintroduction of the scheme at the earliest opportunity. Following a meeting in October, the Commission asked for evidence by Christmas to inform its reconsideration of the suspended scheme and the scheme the Government are seeking to reintroduce. The Government sent a response on Wednesday 15 December.

Tax Credit

Mr Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many households received tax credit awards in 2009-10. [31402]

Mr Gauke: As at April 2010, 6.3 million families, containing 10.2 million children, were tax credit recipients or were receiving the equivalent child support through benefits.

This information is based on provisional snapshot data. More information on these data can be found at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-apr2010.pdf

Taxation: Pensioners

Mr Tom Harris: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether discretionary awards of *(a)* a lump sum and *(b)* annual compensation made to former employees by local authorities in accordance with part III of the Local Government (Discretionary Payments and Injury Benefits) (Scotland) Regulations 1998 will be (i) treated by HM Revenue and Customs as pension payments for the purposes of the revised annual allowance and life time allowance and (ii) taxable under the reformed system for pensions tax relief to be introduced from April 2011. [30927]

Mr Hoban: The tax treatment of any payment under the Local Government (Discretionary Payments and Injury Benefits) (Scotland) Regulations 1998 will depend on the nature of the particular payment and how it is paid. If paid out of the local government superannuation scheme, it will be subject to the registered pension scheme tax rules whether paid before or after April 2011, including any potential interaction with the annual allowance and lifetime allowance.

This is a complex area and if the hon. Member wants further information about the tax treatment of these sorts of payments, then I suggest he contacts HMRC at:

pensions.policy@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

Written Questions: Government Responses

Mr Cash: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he plans to provide a substantive answer to question 29295, on the European Financial Stability Mechanism, tabled on 2 December 2010 for named day answer on 7 December 2010. [31471]

Mr Hoban: I have replied to my hon. Friend.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Biomass Importation

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change whether his Department has made a recent assessment of the *(a)* ability of the UK to be self-sufficient in the production of biomass and *(b)* effects on energy security of biomass importation; and if he will make a statement. [31006]

Charles Hendry: Biomass has a greater range of uses than just energy production. For example it can also be used to provide a wide range of renewable raw materials and therefore has a significant role to play in the development of a low carbon economy. However, sustainable biomass is likely to be an important contributor to our renewable energy ambitions. Analysis undertaken last year suggested that heat and electricity from biomass could provide nearly a third of UK needs from renewables by 2020 (about 4.5% of overall energy demand). Delivering our ambition for renewables will not be easy. We will need to ensure that the available mix of biomass feedstocks, both imported and domestically sourced, is sustainable and secure if we are to meet these ambitions.

The Department has not assessed the UK's ability to be self sufficient in the production of biomass. However, estimates provided by E4Tech in 2009 considered the technical potential for domestic biomass production for bioenergy and suggested a maximum technical UK supply of almost 700PJ in 2020, raising to 900PJ in 2030.

Analysis undertaken suggested that we could need around 350-400PJ of solid biomass to meet the deployment trajectories in the heat and electricity sectors.

Security of biomass and sustainability are very important. Together with domestic biomass feedstocks, sustainably sourced imported biomass is expected to play a key role in helping to meet our renewable energy targets. Through our proposals on the renewables obligation and electricity market reform we are providing the transparency longevity and certainty that industry requires to allow it to establish robust, sustainable and efficient supply chains; with long term supply contracts, sourcing from more than one country and ensuring that domestic production is maximised where it is sustainable and feasible.

Carbon Emissions

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent estimate his Department has made of the direct carbon dioxide emissions in kilograms per megawatt hour arising from the combustion of *(a)* wood chip in large-scale installations and *(b)* hard coal. [31008]

Gregory Barker: Estimates in the UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory funded by the Department indicate that large-scale combustion of coal and of wood produce direct carbon dioxide emissions of about 309 and 367 kg C02 per megawatt hour of thermal energy released, respectively.

However, in the case of biomass that is sustainably grown the carbon dioxide released on combustion will be removed over several decades by replanting and regrowth. For fossil fuels there is no equivalent process of carbon removal as their formation requires millions of years rather than decades. Therefore it is the assessments of emissions over the wider lifecycle that are important when comparing biomass with coal, including cultivation, processing and transportation.

This is why we are introducing sustainability criteria for biomass, under the renewables obligation, that include a greenhouse gas lifecycle assessment.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31229]

Gregory Barker: At 30 November 2010 the Department for Energy and Climate change had no staff who earned less than the London living wage of £7.85 per hour.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31186]

Gregory Barker: I estimate that the Department will pay around £450,000 more in irrecoverable VAT in 2011-12 than in 2010-11 as a result of the changed VAT rate.

Departmental spending review settlements are set on a tax-inclusive basis, including the increase to the standard rate of VAT and that departments can recover the VAT on some contracted cut services.

Energy Supply

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what assessment he has made of the availability of gas and fuel oil supplies to domestic customers during the recent winter weather; and if he will make a statement. [31136]

Charles Hendry *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: The recent episode of very severe weather has led to significant disruption to road networks and resulted in a backlog of fuel supply deliveries for the heating oil and LPG industry across parts of the UK; heating oil and LPG suppliers are working hard to address delivery backlogs. The Government have provided a temporary relaxation of regulations governing drivers' hours which will help suppliers to make up backlogs and meet seasonal customer demand.

Dan Byles: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what assessment his Department has made of the implications for commercial landlords of the European Court of Justice's ruling on the provision of third party access to licence exempt electricity and gas networks. [31205]

Charles Hendry: The European Court of Justice's ruling means that all licence-exempt electricity and gas networks owned by commercial landlords, such as ports, will be required by law to provide third party access on request to give consumers a choice of electricity and/or gas supplier.

Where meters are required or upgrading is necessary to facilitate third party access, the costs associated with such work will ultimately be met by the customer or the prospective third party supplier rather than the licence exempt network owner. The energy regulator, Ofgem, has confirmed that private network owners, including commercial landlords, will not be obliged to upgrade their networks or become licensed distributors in order to allow third party access.

Dan Byles: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the change in energy costs to consumers of electricity and gas which will arise from implementation of his proposals to ensure third-party access to licence exempt electricity and gas networks in *(a)* ports, *(b)* railway stations, *(c)* London Underground stations, *(d)* industrial estates, *(e)* marinas, *(f)* airports and *(g)* caravan parks. [31378]

Charles Hendry: The provision of third party access to unlicensed networks will enable consumers of those networks to take advantage of the competitive energy market by choosing their energy supplier. In their 2008 Energy Supply Probe the energy regulator, Ofgem, estimated that customers switching their energy supplier could make a saving of up to 6% on their energy costs.

Dan Byles: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change for what reasons his Department's consultation on the provision of third party access to licence-exempt electricity and gas networks lasted five weeks; how many consultations his Department has run which lasted *(a)* less than six weeks, *(b)* from six to 12 weeks and *(c)* 12 weeks or more in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [31379]

Charles Hendry: DECC consultations follow the Government Code of Practice on Consultations

http://www.bis.gov.uk/files/file47158.pdf

This recommends that under normal circumstances, consultations should last a minimum of 12 weeks, but acknowledges that deviation from the code will, at times, be unavoidable when running a formal, written consultation.

The five-week period in this case was a final detailed consultation that followed both the formal 12 week consultation that set out the government's policy intentions and a call for evidence that sought stakeholder views. It also followed an extensive stakeholder engagement programme. The details of that programme, which included a workshop and numerous bilateral meetings, can be found in my reply to the hon. Member for Poplar and Limehouse (Jim Fitzpatrick) on 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 11-12W.

Since DECC was formed in October 2008, consultations have been run for the following periods:

	Number of consultations		
	12 weeks or longer	*6-12 weeks*	*Less than 6 weeks*
2008	2	1	0
2009	25	8	2
2010	17	13	[illegible]

Fuel Poverty

Mrs Glindon: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what his most recent estimate is of the number of households in fuel poverty in *(a)* North Tyneside constituency, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* the UK. [31998]

Gregory Barker: In 2006, the most recent year for which sub-regional figures are available, there were around 6,000 fuel-poor households in the North Tyneside constituency.

In 2008, there were 236,000 fuel-poor households in the north-east and 4.5 million fuel-poor households in the UK.

Fuel Poverty: Finance

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will consider the merits of an adapted Green Deal finance mechanism to provide for a third party to meet the repayment charges for fuel-poor households in whole or in part; and if he will make a statement. [31762]

Gregory Barker: The Green Deal finance mechanism sets out that repayments must be made through the energy bill. However it does not prevent a third party meeting the Green Deal part of a household's energy bill.

We are also designing the new Energy Company Obligation to ensure that further support is available under the Green Deal for those in need of additional help, including low-income vulnerable households and those in hard-to-treat properties.

Energy suppliers currently have an obligation to protect vulnerable consumers and to assist those who are struggling to pay for their bills. All existing protections in the gas and electricity market for vulnerable consumers will be extended to Green Deal repayments.

Renewable Energy

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the proportion of commercial properties which have solar panels. [31390]

Charles Hendry: The Department does not hold information on the overall number of commercial properties that have installed solar photovoltaic (PV) panels.

The main support for solar PV panels is the feed-in-tariffs (FITs). OFGEM provides data on installations accredited for FITs by technology, which can be viewed at:

https://www.renewablesandchp.ofgem.gov.uk/Default.aspx

As at 3 December 2010, there were 109 commercial installations claiming FITs.

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what assessment he has made of the potential role of small and medium-sized businesses in providing electricity from solar sources; and if he will make a statement. [31398]

Charles Hendry: No quantitative assessment has been made of the potential role of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in generating electricity from solar sources. However, an impact assessment supporting the start of the UK's feed-in tariffs (FITs) scheme offers projections of installations in the commercial sector, available at:

http://www.decc.gov.uk/publications/basket.aspx?FilePath=Consultations%5cRenewable+Electricity+Financial+Incentives%5cl_20100204103559_e_%40%40_FITsImpactAssessmentaccompanyingGovernmentResponse.pdf&filetype=4

The impact assessment confirms that FITs will create new opportunities for SMEs which install small-scale low-carbon electricity generating technologies. Technologies supported by FITs include solar photovoltaics.

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change whether his Department has any plans to establish regional strategies for the production of renewable energy; and if he will make a statement. [32094]

Charles Hendry: We have made a clear commitment in our Coalition programme for government to give more power to local communities to shape the environment in which they live. The Localism Bill published on 13 December 2010 sets out proposals which will underpin this power shift, including the abolition of regional spatial strategies.

DECC is funding nine renewable and low carbon capacity assessment studies, covering England. The results of these studies will help local authorities identify and maximise opportunities for renewable energy deployment in their areas. The results of all nine studies should be available by next spring.

Renewable Energy: Feed-in Tariffs

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many milliwatt hours of renewable electricity has been generated by each micro technology under the feed-in tariff (FIT) scheme since its inception; how much of that energy has been generated in Yorkshire; and how much FIT funding has been paid for each of these technologies. [32299]

Charles Hendry: The FITs scheme began in April 2010, and information on FITs funding is not yet available in the form requested. However, the Ofgem statistics confirm that FITs payments made over the first two quarters of the scheme were £182,059 (April-June) and £2,504,712.55 (July-September).

Information on the number of installations registered for feed-in tariffs (FITs), broken down by technology and geographical location, is available from Ofgem at:

https://www.renewablesandchp.ofgem.gov.uk

Statistics from Ofgem on the first six months of the FITs scheme, available at:

www.ofgem.gov.uk/fits

includes a map showing the regional breakdown of FITs activity. This shows that in Yorkshire and the Humber, 4,336 MW of installed capacity was registered for FITs.

River Severn: Tidal Power

Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (1) from what budgets funding was drawn for the Severn Tidal Power Feasibility Study; and how much funding each organisation contributed under each budget heading in respect of that study; [30006]

(2) what his most recent estimate is of the cost to the public purse of the Severn Tidal Power Feasibility Study. [30017]

Charles Hendry: The cost to the public purse of the Severn Tidal Power Feasibility Study is expected to be £6.355 million. This is the cost of external research studies and technology development support and does not include the administration costs of the cross-Government STP team, led by DECC.

The above figure is broken down as follows, drawn from the budget headings indicated:

DECC £5.646 million from the Environmental Transformation Fund

DEFRA £325,000 from the Climate Change Mitigation Programme

WAG £213,000 from the Economic Research line within the Economic Policy budget and from the Environment Sustainability and Housing Main Expenditure Group

SWRDA £171,000 from their general budget.

Sheffield Forgemasters: Finance

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 523W, on Sheffield Forgemasters, whether he has had discussions with his ministerial colleagues on Sheffield Forgemasters since the collective Government decision not to proceed with the loan to the company on the grounds of affordability was taken. [31943]

Charles Hendry: Yes. Following the decision not to proceed with the loan we had discussions about the possibility of the company being able to secure private sector investment to enable them to take the project forward.

Solar Power

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 676W, on solar power, if he will publish the minutes of his meeting with Renewables UK and the microgeneration sector on 24 November 2010; and whether any actions were agreed upon as a result of that meeting. [32248]

Charles Hendry: There are no formal minutes of the stakeholder briefing and discussion session on feed-in tariffs (FITs) that the Minister of State, my hon. Friend the Member for Bexhill and Battle (Gregory Barker) hosted on 24 November 2010. The event considered the spending review commitment on FITs, including the possibility of an early review being triggered by higher than expected uptake. It also considered possible approaches to setting this trigger.

Attendees were invited to follow up in writing with further thoughts and to indicate any interest in future involvement. Ministers are reflecting on feedback from the event and the Department will confirm the way forward in the near future.

Tidal and Wave Power

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what plans he has to provide capital funding for commercial deployment of wave and tidal energy technologies following the withdrawal of the Marine Renewables Deployment Fund. [31354]

Charles Hendry: The funding for marine energy demonstration is being treated in the same way as all departmental innovation funding streams in the light of the spending review.

The Government are currently developing their detailed plans for the allocation of the £200 million to support the development of energy technologies announced in the spending review, and measures to support wave and tidal technologies are being considered as part of that process.

Warm Front Scheme

Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the proportion of households in fuel poverty who are eligible for assistance under the Warm Front scheme. [31114]

Gregory Barker: The latest available figures for England (2008) show that around 34% of fuel poor households are eligible for Warm Front under the existing eligibility criteria[1].

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[1] Annual Report on Fuel Poverty Statistics 2010 (DECC).

Luciana Berger: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many households received grants through the Warm Front scheme (*a*) nationally and (*b*) in Liverpool, Wavertree constituency in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [31473]

Gregory Barker: The following table shows the number of households assisted by the Warm Front scheme nationally and in the constituency of Liverpool, Wavertree in 2009-10:

Households, 2009-10

	Number
National	212,963
Liverpool, Wavertree	1,238

Luciana Berger: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the likely effect on the number of fuel-poor households of changes to the funding for the Warm Front scheme. [31568]

Gregory Barker: The Warm Front scheme is expected to assist approximately 170,000 households in 2010-11. As announced in the spending review, DECC will fund a smaller, more targeted Warm Front scheme over the next two years and has estimated that the scheme will assist approximately 57,000 households in 2011-12, and 50,000 in 2012-13

Julian Sturdy: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what proportion of work carried out under the Warm Front scheme was completed within six months of commencement in the latest period for which figures are available. [31803]

Gregory Barker: In 2009-10, the Warm Front scheme completed 92.8% of heating installations and 99.5% of insulation installations within six months.

Wind Power

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change how many wind turbines were retro-fitted to properties in each year since 2005. [31099]

Charles Hendry: The Department does not hold information on the overall number of wind turbines fitted to existing properties. Under the previous "Low Carbon Building Programme" (2005-10), the following grants were made for small wind turbines which were not new builds.

Number of grants

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*Total*
Householders	0	20	439	99	109	667
Non-domestic	0	0	0	7	33	40
Total	0	20	439	106	142	707

Value of grants

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
Householders	0	89,563	964,683	212,916	255,648	1,522,810
Non-domestic	0	0	0	98,227	411,669	509,896
Total	0	89,563	964,683	311,143	667,317	2,032,706

Domestic, commercial and community installations of wind turbines can claim the feed-in tariffs (FITs). Ofgem is providing live data on installations accredited for FITs by technology, which can be viewed at:

https://www.renewablesandchp.ofgem.gov.uk/Default.aspx

This online information includes some wind turbine installations funded under the Low Carbon Buildings Programme.

Timber

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (1) whether his Department has made an estimate of the level of global *(a)* supplies and *(b)* demand for wood chip and pellet-derived biomass in (i) 2010-11 and (ii) the next five years; [31005]

(2) what estimate he has made of the likely level of demand for wood fibre arising from the construction of large-scale biomass power plants in the next 10 years. [31007]

Charles Hendry: Wood fibre in the form of wood chip, pellet or log is one of several forms of biomass that can be used to produce renewable energy.

Based on an IEA study, estimates of global supplies of woody biomass have been provided by E4Tech. This indicates that current supplies available for bioenergy are around 7,000 PJ, doubling to about 14,000 PJ by 2015. This report is available at:

http://www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/what%20we%20do/uk%20energy%20supply/energy%20mix/renewable%20energy/renewable%20energy%20strategy/1_20090716112412_e_@@_e4techbiomasssupplycurvesfortheukurn09d690.pdf

The Department is currently updating this information, aiming to publish revised figures early next year.

Information is also published by the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, providing forest resource analyses and forestry sector outlooks.

The Department has not carried out an analysis of global demand for wood fibre. However, the IEA 2009 report, "Bioenergy a Sustainable and Reliable Energy Source", summarises available analyses on biomass availability to 2050. This reports that currently biomass supplies some 50,000PJ (1.2Gtoe) of energy globally per year.

Current estimates suggest that in the UK, there is 784 MW of new bioelectricity capacity under construction; 1,710 MW of new capacity that has been through planning consent and is awaiting construction; and 3,535 MW of new capacity is under planning consideration. This information is taken from the Renewable Energy Planning Database which is regularly updated.

Assuming all this capacity became operational, this would result in a maximum total demand for biomass of around 600PJ, equivalent to 32Mt wood, including demand from existing generators. However, these plants would use a variety of biomass feedstocks, including wastes, sewage, straw, energy crops and forest products including residues.

Susan Elan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what representations on financial support for biomass energy generation his Department has received from representatives of the wood processing industry. [31009]

Charles Hendry: On 13 September, the Minister for Climate Change, my hon. Friend the Member for Bexhill and Battle (Gregory Barker), met representatives of the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Wood Panel Industry and the Wood Panel Industries Federation (WPIF). A wide range of issues, including the financial incentives for bioenergy generation, were raised at the meeting.

DECC officials have also met representatives from the wood processing industries. The WPIF, the Confederation of Forest Industries (ConFor) and the Confederation of Paper Industries have responded to recent consultations such as the Renewable Heat Incentive or regarding changes to the Renewables Obligation. Their responses are available from the DECC website.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan: Armed Forces and Police

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of retention rates in the Afghan National *(a)* Army and *(b)* Police in 2010; and if he will make a statement. [30600]

Peter Luff: We are making good progress on growing the Afghan National Security Forces and are currently ahead of schedule for meeting the target of 171,600 Afghan National Army and 134,000 Afghan national police by the end of 2011.

Retention is a matter for the Government of Afghanistan but we will continue to work closely with them to help build their capacity and capability.

Afghanistan: Peacekeeping Operations

Mr Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects winter clothing to be issued to members of the armed forces stationed in Kabul. [31886]

Peter Luff: Service personnel who will require winter clothing for use in Afghanistan are issued it either prior to their deployment or in theatre when weather conditions necessitate it. There is no shortage of winter clothing for troops in Afghanistan and Commanders are able to draw upon stocks of winter clothing in theatre if necessary, for example if an item is lost or damaged.

Armed Forces: Redundancy

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the likely effect on standing commitments of the redundancies in the *(a)* Army, *(b)* Royal Navy and *(c)* RAF announced in the Strategic Defence and Security Review. [30602]

Dr Fox: The Strategic Defence and Security Review sets out the requirements for the armed forces' contribution to standing commitments and identifies the re-structured forces we will need over the next 10 years to meet them. Changes in manpower in the three services will not affect our non-discretionary standing commitments. We will make manpower reductions in a structured way to protect operational capabilities.

Army: Manpower

Mr Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what budgetary allocations he has made for an army of 96,000; if he will assess the affordability of an army of that strength; what estimate he has made of the allocation required for an army of 82,000; and what budgetary allocations he has made for the army in each year to 2015 as a result of the outcome of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. [31724]

Peter Luff: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) made estimates of the cost savings which could result from the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) for the purposes of formulating policy. Final budgetary allocations are subject to the ongoing planning process. Until that process is complete, the MOD is unable to release more detailed figures.

British Overseas Territories: Navy

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effect on naval operations in British Overseas Territories of changes to Royal Navy capability resulting from the outcome of the strategic defence and security review; and if he will make a statement. [31098]

Peter Luff: The Government reiterated our commitment to the defence of the UK's overseas territories in the strategic defence and security review. The Royal Navy is a modern, powerful and capable force and remains able to deploy a taskforce worldwide in support of our national interests. Inevitably, with fewer ships there will have to be some reduction in activity, but the Royal Navy will continue to send ships to priority regions such as the north and south Atlantic, the Indian ocean and the Gulf.

Departmental Consultants

Mr Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on consultants since 1 May 2010. [31141]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* The Ministry of Defence has spent £13.42 million on consultants in the period 1 May to 30 October 2010, the latest period for which information is available. This figure includes MOD trading fund agencies. The majority of the expenditure was the result of contracts placed prior to 24 May 2010, the start of the Consultancy Moratorium enacted by the Coalition Government.

Consultancy covers management consultancy, specialist lawyers, commercial bankers and IT expertise.

Departmental Energy

Mr Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the recommended ambient room temperature is for offices on his Department's estate. [31089]

Peter Luff: The Ministry of Defence does not mandate a recommended ambient room temperature for its offices on the Defence estate beyond ensuring that the temperature in all workplaces inside buildings is in accordance with the requirements of the Approved Codes of Practice to the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, which require a minimum temperature of 16 degrees Celsius when offices are occupied.

It is up to heads of establishment at individual buildings to determine what the ambient temperature should be providing that the minimum temperature of 16 degrees Celsius is achieved.

Departmental Information Officers

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many press and communication posts in his Department are remunerated at *(a)* between £50,000 and £99,999 and *(b)* £100,000 or over. [30400]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* Our records indicate that in March 2010, 52 press and communication posts across Defence were remunerated at between £50,000 and £99,999. These posts are across the military and civilian defence community, in the UK and overseas in Headquarters and in the single Service units.

A further 109 posts were filled by military ranks or civilian grades for which the salary range straddled £50,000. The range of salaries that these posts could have been paid is between £45,190 and £56,078. It is not possible to say how many of these individuals were paid more than £50,000.

There was one press and communications post remunerated at £100,000 or over, which is a military two-star appointment.

We are taking a number of steps to reduce expenditure on defence media and communications. This will include further post reductions.

Departmental NDPBs

Michael Dugher: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many fixed-term appointments each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies has made since May 2010; [31641]

(2) what the average salary was of staff of each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies on fixed-term contracts in *(a)* April 2010 and *(b)* each subsequent month; [31642]

(3) what the total cost to his Department was of staff on fixed-term appointments in each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies in *(a)* April 2010 and *(b)* each subsequent month; [31643]

(4) what the total cost to his Department was for staff of each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies on fixed-term contracts in *(a)* April 2010 and *(b)* each subsequent month; [31644]

(5) how many full-time equivalent staff were employed in each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies in *(a)* April 2010 and *(b)* each subsequent month. [31645]

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many full-time equivalent staff were employed by each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies in *(a)* April 2010 and *(b)* each subsequent month; [31566]

(2) what the staff cost was of each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies in May 2010; and what estimate he has made of the likely cost in *(a)* financial years (i) 2010-11, (ii) 2011-12 and, (iii) 2013-14 and *(b)* each year of the comprehensive spending review period. [31569]

Peter Luff: The Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, my hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr Robathan), will write to the hon. Members soon after the Christmas recess, to enable officials to collect the required data.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31219]

Mr Robathan: The London living wage is designed to ensure that the unemployed in London are better off in work than living on benefits. It is not a statutory requirement.

Calculations have been made on base pay including separate London allowances (inner/outer London weighting).

Excluding trading funds, there are 265 civilian staff employed in London by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage. All MOD staff are paid above the statutory national minimum wage.

Departmental Redundancy

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on redundancy costs since 1 May 2010. [31296]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: It will not be until the departmental resource accounts are published and laid before Parliament in July 2011 that it will be possible to give definitive figures for the current financial year.

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate his Department has made of the cost of redundancies in the Department in 2010-11. [31411]

Mr Robathan *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: The financial provision made for redundancy and early release costs for the 2010-11 financial year amounts to £62 million.

No firm forecast has yet been made of redundancy/early release costs for the comprehensive spending review.

Departmental Travel

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on use of the Government Car Service in each month since April 2010. [31692]

Peter Luff: Ministry of Defence (MOD) payments to the Government Car and Despatch Agency for use of the Government Car Service since April 2010 have been as follows:

	Payment (£)
2010	
April	0
May	451
June	0
July	430
August	215
September	236
October	215
November	215

The MOD generally uses its own car pool for providing a car service to our Ministers, senior officials and Service officers, which gives us better value for money and operational flexibility.

European Defence Agency: Finance

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much funding the Government provided for the European Defence Agency in each year since 2005; and what proportion of the Agency's funding this figure represented in each such year. [30423]

Mr Gerald Howarth: The amount paid by the Ministry of Defence to the European Defence Agency's budget in each year since 2005 and the proportion of the Agency's funding that the amounts represent are as follows:

Calendar year	*£ million*	*Proportion of UK share to total Agency budget (percentage)*
2005	2.36	18.1
2006	2.09	17.6
2007	1.95	17.0
2008	3.11	17.2
2009	3.03	15.4
2010	3.23	13.9

Military Aircraft

Dr Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2010, *Official Report,* columns 317-19W, on military aircraft, whether he estimated that the retention of 50 selected Harriers and 50 selected Tornados would be less costly than retaining 137 Tornados only; to what refitting in respect of the 15 Harrier GR9s which have returned from operations in Afghanistan he referred to in his answer; for what reason a mixed force of Harriers and Tornados has not been retained; if he will place in the Library a suitably redacted copy of the advice given to the Prime Minister on the fast jet fleet; and whether the final decision on retaining Tornados only was taken by *(a)* the chiefs of staff, *(b)* the National Security Council, *(c)* the Cabinet and *(d)* the Prime Minister. [30068]

Peter Luff *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* The overriding factor in deciding between removing either the Tornado GR4 or Harrier was the ability to support operations in Afghanistan. A fleet of 50 Tornado and 50 Harrier aircraft would have been unable to maintain continuous support to operations in Afghanistan at current levels and maintain the ability to support concurrent operations. In addition, withdrawal of an aircraft type delivers greater savings than partial reductions, due to the fixed costs associated with supporting an aircraft platform; therefore running two smaller fleets would not have been cost-effective.

When the 15 Harrier GR9 aircraft returned from their deployment to Afghanistan, the funding to support their urgent operational requirements ceased and as such this equipment was removed from the aircraft. If Harrier had been required to redeploy to Afghanistan, these capabilities would need to have been re-activated, either with new funding streams or replacements where they had been superseded and could have taken up to 18 months.

In relation to release of further details regarding the military advice given to the Prime Minister, including savings estimates, I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him, and to my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth North (Penny Mordaunt) on 24 November 2010, *Official Report,* columns 317-19W.

The Strategic Defence and Security Review decisions were taken by the National Security Council, chaired by the Prime Minister.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which aircraft are equipped with the Joint Tactical Information Distribution System; and whether the Nimrod MR4A aircraft was equipped with the Joint Tactical Information Distribution System. [30116]

Peter Luff: Aircraft currently equipped with the Joint Tactical Information Distribution System (JTIDS) are as follows: Tornado F3, Typhoon, E-3D Sentry, Nimrod R1, Sentinel R1, VC10, TriStar, Hercules C130 and Sea King Mk7.

In addition to those aircraft that currently have JTIDS, it is planned to install the system on the following aircraft in future: Tornado GR4, Joint Strike Fighter, Rivet Joint, FSTA and A400M.

The Nimrod MRA4 would have also been equipped with JTIDS.

Military Bases

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what plans he has to consult *(a)* local authorities, *(b)* hon. Members, *(c)* economic development agencies and *(d)* the devolved administrations during his Department's base review; [30686]

(2) what methodology will be used to decide which bases will be recommended for *(a)* closure and *(b)* realignment under his Department's base review; [30687]

(3) what other Departments are being consulted as part of his Department's base review; and what information his Department has asked such departments to provide. [30852]

Nick Harvey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, my hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr Robathan) on 6 December 2010, *Official Report,* column 8W, to the right hon. and learned Member for North East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much was spent under each budgetary heading on running costs for each *(a)* Royal Navy, *(b)* Royal Marines and *(c)* Army base in the UK (i) in each of the last five financial years and (ii) in 2010-11. [30688]

Peter Luff: The information requested is not held at that level of detail and it could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Through the implementation of the strategic defence and security review and the work of the Defence Reform Unit, we are seeking to better establish how costs are driven and to make more efficient use of resources. We expect the work on Defence Reform to report by July 2011.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions he has met *(a)* the Chancellor of the Exchequer and *(b)* the Secretary of State for (i) Northern Ireland, (ii) Scotland, (iii) Wales and (iv) Communities and Local Government to discuss his Department's base review. [30853]

Dr Fox: I meet frequently with Cabinet colleagues to discuss a range of issues relating to the strategic defence and security review, including the implications for the Defence estate and basing. This will continue as will my officials' ongoing consultations on this subject with their colleagues in other Government Departments, and with trade unions, local councils and other external organisations.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to review the continuance of RAF bases; and if he will make a statement. [31204]

Nick Harvey: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, my hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr Robathan) on 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 8W, to the right hon. and learned Member for North East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell).

Ministry of Defence Police

Dr Whiteford: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether any proposals contained in the Strategic Defence and Security Review will affect the policing by Ministry of Defence Police of the St Fergus gas terminal and Garlogie compressor plant. [31143]

Mr Robathan: The current policing arrangements at St Fergus and Garlogie will not be affected by the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Dr Whiteford: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on the establishment of a permanent base for Ministry of Defence Police at the St Fergus gas terminal. [31144]

Mr Robathan: The Ministry of Defence Police deployment is fully funded by the gas companies through an arrangement with the Office for Gas and Electricity Market under provisions contained within the Counter Terrorism Act 2008. Costs are reimbursed to the Ministry of Defence.

MR1185 Study

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the criteria for inclusion in the MR1185 study are; what progress has been made on the study to date; and which veterans' groups have participated in the study. [31051]

Anne Milton: I have been asked to reply.

The reference MR1185 is not known but is assumed to incorrectly refer to MR185, the national health service information centre's reference number for the Nuclear Weapons Test Participants Study (NWTPS) undertaken by the former National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB).

The NWTPS study was commissioned in 1983 and three successive analysis projects have been completed by the NRPB researchers. Details about the study and the three analysis projects have been published in peer-reviewed journals and as NRPB reports. References for each of these papers and reports can be found through the website link shown.

The criteria for inclusion in the NWTPS study are described in detail in the NRPB reports but, in summary, the study group consisted of men who were recorded as having attended at least one of the sites used in the United Kingdom atmospheric nuclear weapon tests during the relevant periods and whose details were confirmed from contemporary records.

The British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (BNTVA) and the former British Atomic Veterans Association as well as the British Legion were consulted during the first NRPB analysis project and contacts with BNTVA continued through to the third analysis. In particular, a BNTVA representative was included, as an observer, in the third analysis Project Management Group. Pre and post-publication presentations relating to the NRPB studies have been made to veterans' audiences, including a BNTVA AGM, by NRPB researchers.

Further information about the NWTPS study can be found on, or through references from, the HPA website at:

www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/Radiation/UnderstandingRadiation/UnderstandingRadiationTopics/RadiationEpidemiology/NuclearWeaponsTestParticipantsStudy/

Nuclear Submarines

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the number of warheads deployed on each Vanguard class submarine will be reduced to no more than 40; when the stockpile of operationally available warheads will be reduced to no more than 120; and when warheads which have been removed from the operation stockpile will be dismantled. [20822]

Dr Fox: I will write to the hon. Member.

Rescue Services

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times search and rescue helicopters based at RAF Lossiemouth have been involved in operations to rescue individuals from mountains in Scotland in each of the last five years. [31142]

Peter Luff: The information requested is provided in the following table. The numbers provided are for all occasions when an aircraft was launched in response to a distress situation. We consider mountain rescue incidents to comprise callouts to casualties or missing persons in remote areas or hilly terrain.

	Number of mountain rescues
2005	80
2006	85
2007	76
2008	109
2009	117
2010 (to 14 December)	82

Sri Lanka

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) upon whose invitation he is visiting Sri Lanka on 18 December 2010; in what capacity; and what meetings he plans to have during his visit; [31849]

(2) whether he plans to report to *(a)* ministerial colleagues and *(b)* the House on the situation in Sri Lanka when he returns from his visit to that country on 18 December 2010. [31851]

Dr Fox: I have postponed my private visit to Sri Lanka due to an extended scheduled official visit to the Gulf. I intend to carry out an official visit to Sri Lanka in the course of next year.

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who will be responsible for bearing the costs of his visit to Sri Lanka on 18 December 2010. [31850]

Dr Fox: This was to be a private visit, and privately funded. However I have postponed it due to an extended scheduled official visit to the Gulf. I intend to carry out an official visit to Sri Lanka in the course of next year.

Strategic Defence and Security Review: Costs

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost to his Department was of printing copies of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. [31290]

Dr Fox *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* The Ministry of Defence spent £2,300 on copies of the National Security Strategy and the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost to his Department was of communications for the *(a)* consultation and *(b)* launch of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. [31291]

Dr Fox *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* Consulting and communicating on the Strategic Defence and Security Review was core departmental business and it is not possible to identify costs separately.

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost to his Department was of overnight accommodation for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* civilian staff required as part of the Strategic Defence and Security Review process. [31292]

Dr Fox *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* The Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) was core departmental business incorporated into the routine work of Ministers and staff. No overnight accommodation costs were incurred by Ministers solely as part of the SDSR process. A significant number of civilian staff were engaged at various stages, and it is not possible to identify what element of detached duty costs incurred by civilian staff during the period of the SDSR was required specifically as part of the review process.

Strategic Defence and Security Review: Public Consultation

Mr Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what consultation process was followed as part of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. [30603]

Dr Fox: My ministerial colleagues and I, and officials from the Ministry of Defence (MOD), engaged a variety of academic organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), trade unions, and industry representatives during the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). We also discussed the review with our allies and partners.

I invited contributions to the SDSR in July 2010. The MOD received over 6,000 responses from MPs, members of the armed forces, public servants within and beyond Defence, industry, academics and the public, together with over 1,000 letters and e-mails. Every response was read during the review by a member of the SDSR team, and the ideas and concerns they contained contributed to the MOD's thinking on the choices we faced.

In parallel with this activity, the Cabinet Office also engaged with external experts during the SDSR.

TRANSPORT

Airports

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will consider the merits of introducing measures at all airports allowing expedited access for uniformed crew. [31382]

Mrs Villiers: Aviation security search measures apply equally to all (passengers, airport staff and aircrew including pilots) regardless of gender, race, age and occupation, with only a very limited number of exemptions, for example in respect of heads of state. The more people we exempt from search, the greater the risk this creates.

We would be wary of creating a two-tier screening system that may increase the likelihood of people becoming targets for coercion. Even professional pilots with the highest levels of integrity and honesty can find themselves the subject of coercion or blackmail from those who might seek to force them to carry prohibited items into a critical part of an airport.

All screening measures are kept under review. The Department for Transport has regular dialogue with industry partners, including representatives of airline pilots, to ensure that security measures are commensurate with the existing threat.

Airports: Freight

Mr Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the levels of freight passing through each of the UK's airports were in each year since 2001. [30882]

Mrs Villiers: The level of air freight in tonnes in each year from 1999 to 2009 at the UK airports, that report to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), is published in Table 13.2 of the CAA's Airport Statistics 2009. This table is available on the CAA website at:

http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/80/airport_data/2009Annual/Table_13_2_Freight_1999_2009.pdf

Airports: Radiation Exposure

Bob Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effect on aircrew of repeated exposure to backscatter radiation from airport body scanners. [30479]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport commissioned advice from the UK Health Protection Agency (HPA) on the effective dose of radiation from a back-scatter security scanner.

The HPA concluded that the effective dose from one scan is 0.02 micro Sv or less. This compares with the effective dose received for 1.4 minutes flying at airline cruising height of 0.12 micro Sv. The HPA recommends a dose constraint of 300 micros Sv/year to a member of the public from practices involving the deliberate use of ionising radiation sources.

Given the very significant difference between the effective dose from a back-scatter security scanner and the HPA's annual recommended dose constraint, the Department for Transport has not considered it necessary to commission research on the cumulative effects beyond this limit.

The HPA assessment was published on the DfT website on 1 February 2010.

Aviation: Security

Mr Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has had discussions with the British Airline Pilots' Association on a potential opt-out for airline pilots from body scanning for the purposes of reducing cumulative exposure to radiation. [28616]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport is currently considering responses to a public consultation on the 'Code of Practice for the Acceptable Use of Security Scanners' in the UK. As part of this exercise, the Department consulted representatives from the aviation security industry, including the British Airline Pilots Association. A decision on the future use of security scanners will be made in due course. The Department for Transport commissioned advice from the UK Health Protection Agency (HPA) on the effective dose of radiation from a back-scatter security scanner.

The HPA concluded that the effective dose from one scan is 0.02 micro Sv or less. This compares with the effective dose received for 1.4 minutes flying at airline cruising height of 0.12 micro Sv. The HPA recommends a dose constraint of 300 micros Sv/year to a member of the public from practices involving the deliberate use of ionising radiation sources.

Given the very significant difference between the effective dose from a back-scatter security scanner and the HPA's annual recommended dose constraint, the Department for Transport has not considered it necessary to commission research on the cumulative effects beyond this limit.

The HPA assessment was published on the DfT website on 1 February 2010.

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the cumulative effect of regular use of body scanners on those who are already subject to higher than average levels of cosmic radiation, including pilots. [28833]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport commissioned advice from the UK Heath Protection Agency (HPA) on the effective dose of radiation from a back-scatter security scanner.

The HPA concluded that the effective dose from one scan is 0.02 micro Sv or less. This compares with the effective dose received for 1.4 minutes flying at airline cruising height of 0.12 micro Sv. The HPA recommends a dose constraint of 300 micro Sv/year to a member of the public from practices involving the deliberate use of ionising radiation sources.

Given the very significant difference between the effective dose from a back-scatter security scanner and the HPA's annual recommended dose constraint, the Department for Transport has not considered it necessary to commission research on the cumulative effects beyond this limit.

The HPA assessment was published on the DFT website on 1 February 2010.

British Transport Police: Arrests

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many arrests British Transport Police made in each year since 2007. [31239]

Mrs Villiers: This information is not held by the Department for Transport, but by the British Transport Police who can be contacted at 25 Camden road, London, NW1 9LN or by e-mail at:

parliament@btp.pnn.police.uk

Departmental Manpower

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average salary has been of people on fixed-term contracts in his Department in each month since April 2010. [30943]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 15 December 2010]*: The average annual salary for fixed-term contracts in the Department for Transport and its seven Executive agencies in each month since April 2010 is shown in the following table.

	£
April	32,105.01
May	31,720.97
June	31,424.87
July	31,541.72
August	31,689.09
September	31,890.69
October	32,610.05
November	33,003.69

Departmental NDPBs

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what payroll costs each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) incurred in May 2010; and what estimate he has made of each such NDPB's expenditure on payroll in *(a)* 2010-11, *(b)* 2011-12, *(c)* 2013-14 and *(d)* the spending review period. [30828]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: Estimates of the future payroll expenditure of the Department's non-departmental public bodies will be dependent on the outcome of the review of public bodies. We would expect to make this information available in due course.

The payroll costs for the Department's non-departmental public bodies incurred in May 2010 are:

	Payroll costs incurred in May 2010 (£)
British Transport Police Authority	50,000
Disabled persons' Transport Advisory Committee	7,260
Renewable Fuels Agency	49,320
Directly Operated Railways Ltd	39,700
Northern Lighthouse Board	722,862.60
Passenger Focus	274,813
Trinity Lighthouse	73,194
Traffic Commissioners and Deputies	100,000

Notes:

1. Cycling England: does not exist as its own legal entity—it is essentially part of DfT. It ceases to exist after March 2011.
2. Rail Heritage Committee confirm there is no expenditure.

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff were employed by each non-departmental public body sponsored by his Department in each month since April 2010. [31020]

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff were employed by each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies in *(a)* April 2010 and *(b)* each subsequent month. [30908]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: The number of staff employed by each non-departmental public body sponsored by this Department in each month since April 2010 is as follows:

Number of staff employed

	RFA	*BTPA*	*DPTAC*	*DOR Ltd.*	*Northern Lighthouse Board*	*Passenger, Focus*	*Trinity Lighthouse*	*TCs and DTCs*
April 2010	12.7	8	19	4.9	198.7	68	318	23
May 2010	13.95	8	19	4.9	199.9	67	317	23
June 2010	13.7	8	19	4.9	199.9	67	315	23
July 2010	14.2	8	19	4.2	199.7	66	316	23
August 2010	13.2	8	19	3.9	199.7	68	313	23
September 2010	13.2	8	19	4.9	199.4	68	315	23
October 2010	13.2	8	19	3.9	198.1	68	313	23
November 2010	13.2	8	19	3.9	200.0	67	314	23

Department for Transport non-departmental public bodies are:

RFA—Renewable Fuels Agency

BTPA—British Transport Police Authority

Cycling England

DPTAC—Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee

DOR Ltd.—Directly Operated Railways Ltd

NLB—Northern Lighthouse Board

Passenger Focus

TCs and DTCs Traffic Commissioners and Deputy Traffic Commissioners

TLS—Trinity Lighthouse Service

Cycling England does not exist as its own legal entity—it is essentially part of Department for Transport. It ceases to exist after March 2011.

Healthier Travel Options: Commuters

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department has taken to implement *(a)* greener and *(b)* healthier travel options for commuters. [31079]

Norman Baker: The coalition agreement commits to supporting sustainable travel initiatives, including walking and cycling. The introduction of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, funded to £560 million over this Parliament, will enable the delivery by local transport authorities of sustainable transport solutions geared, among other things, to bringing about changing patterns of travel behaviour and greater use of more sustainable transport modes and so deliver a reduction in carbon and other harmful emissions. It will also facilitate the delivery of additional wider social, environmental, health and safety benefits for local communities, including commuters.

In addition, the recently published public health White Paper, "Healthy Lives, Healthy People" promotes active travel and physical activity, as well as emphasising the importance of road safety.

High Speed II: Finance

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the budget for High Speed Two is; and how many staff of his Department are working on the project. [31250]

Mr Philip Hammond: High Speed Two (HS2) Limited has an agreed budget of £21.1 million (plus the cost of any incurred VAT) for 2010-11. HS2 Limited currently has 56 staff (54.2 FTE).

In addition, five members of staff in the Department for Transport's Rail Strategy Directorate currently work on high speed rail policy.

London and South Eastern Railways: Franchises

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent assessment he has made of the performance of Southeastern in discharging its obligations under its franchise agreement. [30738]

Mrs Villiers: Department for Transport Officials monitor Southeastern's performance against the contract on a four weekly basis. This review includes operational performance and the delivery of committed obligations.

The Southeastern franchise agreement is currently due to end on 31 March 2012, though the option does exist for a two year extension to the agreement to allow the franchise to end on 31 March 2014. In order for Southeastern to be offered that two year extension, they must pass a performance based continuation review. That review period concluded on 12 December 2010 and the Secretary of State expects to notify the operator of the outcome early in the new year.

London and South Eastern Railways: Standards

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of rail services run by Southeastern was subject to a delay of over 10 minutes in *(a)* 2008, *(b)* 2009 and *(c)* 2010. [30735]

Mrs Villiers: The information requested is given in the following table.

Period	*Trains planned*	*Trains more than10 minutes late*	*% of trains more than 10 minutes late*
(a) 2008-9 (periods 1-13)	590,435	13,947	2.4
(b) 2009-10 (periods 1-13)	604,972	16,251	2.7
(c) 2010 (periods 1-8)	417,208	9,808	2.4

Notes:

1. Results are reported on a four weekly periodic basis each year, starting with period 1 on 1 April to period 13 ending on 31 March.
2. Rail Industry Period 8, running from 17 October to 13 November 2010, is the latest period from which this data is available.

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rail services Southeastern has cancelled in *(a)* 2008, *(b)* 2009 and *(c)* 2010. [30736]

Mrs Villiers: The information requested is given in the following table.

Period	*Trains planned*	*Trains cancelled*	*% of trains cancelled*
(a) 2008-9 (periods 1-13)	590,435	7,326	1.2
(b) 2009-10 (periods 1-13)	604,972	9,653	1.6
(c) 2010 (periods 1-8)	417,208	4,008	1.0

Notes:

1. Results are reported on a four weekly periodic basis, starting with period 1 on 1 April to period 13 ending on 31 March.
2. Rail Industry Period 8, running from 17 October to 13 November 2010, is the latest period from which this data is available.

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has had recent discussions with Southeastern on ensuring the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of its service. [30742]

Mrs Villiers: Department for Transport officials review Southeastern's delivery of its services on a four-weekly basis. This includes its train performance and the financial delivery. The effectiveness of the operator's delivery is also tested on an annual basis through the business planning requirements of its franchise agreement.

Separately, as this House is aware, Sir Roy McNulty has published his interim report into the Value for Money of the railway, available at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/rail/strategyfinance/vfminterimreport/

which identifies potential savings of up to £1 billion a year in the running of Britain's railways. The Government will be taking forward these savings with train operators and Network Rail, to ensure a more efficient and effective railway.

London and South Eastern Railways: Tickets

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what mechanisms are in place to ensure that Southeastern carries out efficient ticketing enforcement on its rail services; and if he will make a statement. [30734]

Mrs Villiers: All franchise agreements entered into since 2004 require train operators to implement a structured revenue protection strategy.

Southeastern's revenue protection strategy includes a penalty fares scheme, approved by the Department for Transport. Under the scheme, a passenger who cannot show a valid ticket for their journey, where ticket facilities were available at their starting station, may be liable to a penalty fare of £20 or twice the single fare.

Revenue protection officers operate on the Southeastern network to combat instances of ticketless travel and, where appropriate, to issue penalty fares. The Southeastern network is also served by teams of rail enforcement officers, who are authorised collectors of penalty fares under the penalty fares scheme.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency: Manpower

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many Maritime and Coastguard Agency personnel of each grade were employed in Northern Ireland in each of the last six years. [31947]

Mike Penning: The number of people employed by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in Northern Ireland in each of the last six years by grade is shown in the following table:

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
Coastguard Watch Assistant	12	12	13	6	4	5
Admin Assistant	2	0	0	0	0	0
Total AA or equivalent	14	12	13	6	4	5
Watch Officer	8	9	8	13	14	12
Admin Officer	1	2	4	3	3	3
Total AO or equivalent	9	11	12	16	17	15
Sector Manager	2	2	2	2	2	2
Watch Manager	4	4	4	4	4	4

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Marine Surveyor Grade 3	1	1	1	1	0	0
Total EO or equivalent	7	7	7	7	6	6
Rescue Co-ordination Centre Manager	1	1	1	1	1	1
Higher Executive Officer	1	1	1	1	2	2
Total HEO or equivalent	2	2	2	2	3	3
Senior Executive Officer	1	1	1	0	0	0
Marine Surveyor Grade 1	3	3	3	3	3	3
Total SEO or equivalent	4	4	4	3	3	3
Grade 7 Coastguard	0	0	0	2	1	0
Grade 7 Surveyor	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total Grade 7	2	2	2	4	3	2
Grand total	38	38	40	38	36	34

Midland Main Line: Standards

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the statement of 25 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 466-68, on rail investment, what plans he has to improve the line speed, reliability and capacity of services on the Midland Main Line. [30441]

Mrs Villiers: The spending review confirmed approval for a package of works totalling £69 million to allow increased line speeds on the Midland Main Line by 2013. The work will enable an improvement of at least eight minutes in the journey time between London and Sheffield. At the south end of the route the Thameslink programme will increase capacity and improve accessibility to, from and through London. The first stage is planned to be delivered by 2012.

Motorways: Speed Limits

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which sections of the *(a)* M5, *(b)* M6, *(c)* M1, *(d)* M25, *(e)* M4 and *(f)* M3 are subject to lower speed limits because they do not meet current visibility requirements or have sub-geometric features. [31889]

Mike Penning: There are no sections of M5, M6, M1, M3 or M25 which are subject to lower statutory speed limits because they do not meet current visibility requirements or have sub-geometric features. There are, however, two locations on the M5 between junctions 1 and 4 where advisory speed limits of 50 mph are in place. One is on an elevated section between junctions 1 and 2 (Oldbury) and the other is at junction 4 (Lydiate Ash); both are due to the locations having a tight radius curve.

The M4 eastbound between junction 4 and just prior to the start of the elevated section just before junction 2 is subject to a permanent mandatory speed limit of 60 mph due to sub-geometric features.

The M4 eastbound just prior to the start of the elevated section at junction 2 to the end of the elevated section at junction 1 is subject to a permanent mandatory speed limit of 40 mph due to sub- geometric features.

The M4 westbound from junction 1 to the end of the elevated section just past junction 2 is subject to a permanent mandatory speed limit of 40 mph due to sub-geometric features.

The M4 junction 4 to junction 4a Heathrow Spur (both directions) is subject to a permanent mandatory speed limit of 50 mph due to sub-geometric features.

Rail High Level Group

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) when he plans to announce the membership of the Rail High Level Group; and what criteria he plans to use to determine its membership; [30588]

(2) whether he proposes to set out a remit for the Rail High Level Group in relation to *(a)* structural reform of the rail industry and *(b)* franchise reform. [30589]

Mrs Villiers: No decisions on the composition and terms of reference of the Secretary of State's group, or the way in which industry and passenger interests will contribute to its work, have yet been taken. A further announcement about arrangements will be made shortly.

Railway: Electrification

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Thameslink project will include electrification of the railway between Carlton Road junction (Midland Main Line) and Haringey junction (East Coast Main Line). [29976]

Mrs Villiers: The scope of the Thameslink programme does not include the electrification of the railway between Carlton Road junction (Midland Main Line) and Haringey junction (East Coast Main Line).

Railways: Antisocial Behaviour

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance his Department has issued to train operating companies on addressing antisocial behaviour on passenger rail services. [30433]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport has not issued specific guidance of this nature. Train operators do, though, have long-established and well understood powers under railway byelaws to remove drunk or disruptive passengers from trains and stations. Enforcement is a matter for operators themselves, backed up as necessary by the British Transport police.

Railways: Bridges

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has for the future of the £40 million funding for refurbishment of disused railway bridges at Camden road announced by his Department in 2009. [29956]

Mrs Villiers: We expect this scheme to be a strong candidate for funding in Railway Control Period 5 (2014-2019).

Railways: Concessions

Karl McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* current and *(b)* former employees of Network Rail who receive free rail travel or travel concessions also receive free travel or travel concessions for members of their family who have not worked for Network Rail; and how many such family members receive such free travel or travel concessions. [28586]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 3 December 2010]:* These data are not available.

Railways: Construction

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department has spent to date on the development of High Speed 2 between London and Birmingham; and how much is projected to be spent up to 2015. [29335]

Mr Philip Hammond: For the period between 14 January 2009 and the end of the 2009-10 financial year, HS2 Ltd spent £8.4 million (excluding VAT).

HS2 Ltd's budget for the 2010-11 financial year is approximately £21.2 million (excluding VAT). In addition, the Department for Transport estimates that around £25 million may be required to fund property purchases under the Exceptional Hardship Scheme in the 2010-11 financial year, although actual expenditure will depend on applications received.

For the four years from 2011-12 to 2014-15, the spending review settlement includes approximately £773 million to fund the development of the Government's proposals for a high speed rail network from London to Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds.

Maria Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department has spent on consultants in respect of the preparatory work for the High Speed 2 project. [31010]

Mr Philip Hammond *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd has been set up to take forward work on a new high speed line in the UK. As part of this remit, it has procured specialist engineering, railway operations, environmental assessment and demand modelling consultancy support. HS2 Ltd's budget for this work is £10.8 million in 2010-11. £4.04 million was spent in 2009-10.

Maria Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the cost to his Department is of staff employed to undertake the preparatory work for the High Speed 2 project; [31024]

(2) how many staff are employed by his Department to undertake the preparatory work for the High Speed 2 project. [31025]

Mr Philip Hammond *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* High Speed Two Ltd. has 56 staff (54.2 full-time equivalent). Its 2010-11 budget includes £3.85 million for employment costs.

Railways: Fares

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will assess the likely effects of raising the present cap on rail fares on levels of carbon dioxide emissions; and if he will make a statement. [28094]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* As set out in my answer of 10 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 334W, the Department for Transport has not made a detailed estimate of the likely effects of increases in rail fares on transport emissions. Although the announced fare increases may reduce at the margin the increase in demand for rail travel, the overall impact on carbon emissions is likely to be small.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will assess the effect of increases in rail fares on the number of commuters who travel to work by rail. [31080]

Mrs Villiers: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 10 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 334W. The Department for Transport has not carried out a breakdown of the impact of different types of rail travel.

Railways: Finance

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what budgetary provision he has made for external consulting resources for the rail value for money study. [30579]

Mrs Villiers: The total consultancy budget for the Sir Roy McNulty study is £3,002,400.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consultants his Department used in preparing the interim report of Sir Roy McNulty's value for money review; and what the cost to his Department was of the services of those consultants. [30580]

Mrs Villiers: The interim report included early feedback from a number of research projects commissioned to inform the overall review. No work was specifically commissioned for the interim report. The total costs of the external consultancy work up to the point at which the interim report was prepared are in the region of £1,350,000. External consultants undertaking work on the review are RC&M, Amtec, Civity, Oxera, Atkins, Booz, Capita, Mott MacDonald, Albany Smith, DTZ, SDG, Red Personnel and Aecom.

Railways: Franchises

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when *(a)* his Department plans to begin work on the rail franchise specifications due for renegotiation in 2012 and *(b)* he expects officials of his Department to be available to meet hon. Members in constituencies affected by those franchises to discuss those specifications. [27947]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 2 December 2010]*: Specification began in 2009 for those franchises due to be re-let in 2011 and 2012. A consultation paper for Greater Anglia and East Coast was issued in the early part of the year, when Members of Parliament, transport authorities and passenger representatives were able to comment on rail service issues in their constituencies.

Following a wider consultation on franchise reform that closed in October this year, the Secretary of State made an announcement in December setting out the next steps for the franchise programme. Officials in the Department for Transport would be available to discuss the franchise in the early part of next year.

Railways: Overcrowding

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent estimate he has made of the level of overcrowding on the east coast main line. [25529]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport receives passenger counts data from train operators for travel on weekdays during spring and autumn survey periods. The latest data available for the east coast main line show that, across the spring 2010 count period, the maximum average load did not exceed the planned capacity for the service on any of the days for which data were collected.

The Government's overall strategy for the east coast main line is to increase capacity and improve journey times to meet forecast growth in demand. This will be delivered by a new timetable in May 2011, infrastructure enhancement in CP4 (2009-14) and further improvements to be delivered through a new franchise.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what recent assessment he has made of levels of passenger overcrowding on the rail network in *(a)* London, *(b)* non-metropolitan urban areas and *(c)* metropolitan areas; [25768]

(2) what work his Department is undertaking to collate data on passenger overcrowding on the rail network in *(a)* London, *(b)* non-metropolitan urban areas and *(c)* metropolitan areas; [25793]

(3) what data his Department collated on passenger overcrowding on the rail network in *(a)* London, *(b)* non-metropolitan urban areas and *(c)* metropolitan areas in the latest period for which figures are available. [25821]

Mrs Villiers: Franchised train operators are required by the Department for Transport to undertake passenger counts as part of their franchise agreements. These are requested from all relevant operators twice yearly in the spring and the autumn, focusing on the morning and evening peak demand into major cities, counting arriving train passengers between 0700 and 0959 and departing passengers between 1600 and 1859. The most recent surveys were undertaken during spring 2010.

The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) publishes statistics on "passengers in excess of capacity" in National Rail Trends (NRT) which is available on its website at:

www.rail-reg.gov.uk

These figures were updated in July 2010 for London commuter services, based on autumn 2009 data, and will be published for other regional centres when this information is available.

Train operating companies submit morning and evening peak train plans to the Department for Transport for May and December timetable changes each year. Overcrowding levels are assessed by comparing counts of passengers against the plans. The assessments inform the plans for the next timetable iteration and the deployment of train capacity. These assessments contain commercially confidential information and are not published, but the Department uses the data as the base for strategic forecasts of peak demand change. The latest assessment for each of the franchised operators was for the May 2010 timetable change.

Railways: Recycling

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he plans to take to ensure that holders of rail franchises recycle more waste from trains. [31095]

Mrs Villiers: The Government are currently developing changes to the rail franchising system to make franchises longer, more flexible, more responsive to the needs of passengers and more efficient. As part of this process we are considering how to encourage franchise holders to reduce environmental impacts including through recycling on-train waste.

Railways: South East Region

Harriett Baldwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions his Department has had with Network Rail on the laying of a dual track along the entirety of the Oxford to Worcester railway line. [30739]

Mrs Villiers: The Government are currently funding an upgrade programme to deliver dual tracking over two-thirds of the single track sections between Oxford and Worcester. Network Rail has established this will be sufficient to meet the Government's enhanced capacity and performance rail requirements for 2014. No discussions have taken place for laying dual track on the remaining 10 miles of single track.

Harriett Baldwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to include a new specification in the Malvern to London train franchise for 2013 to include an hourly service. [30740]

Mrs Villiers: Decisions on the specifications for future franchises will be made as each contract is due to be renewed. To date, there have been no decisions relating to future London to Malvern services.

Railways: Stevenage

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will assess the potential effects of the East Coast Eureka timetable on passengers in Stevenage. [29084]

Mrs Villiers: The effect of the new east coast main line timetable on passengers at Stevenage was assessed by the train operator and the Department for Transport as part of the rail industry's development of that timetable. Overall, Stevenage will enjoy an improved level of service. There will be a substantial increase in the number of long distance trains calling at Stevenage—27 per day instead of 19 per day—and although Stevenage will have fewer through trains to stations north of York, good connections will be available at Peterborough, Doncaster or York.

Railways: Suicide

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the incidence of suicide on the rail network in the last 10 years. [30573]

Mrs Villiers: This information is published by the Rail Safety and Standards Board, and can be found in Chart 97 on page 128 of its Annual Safety Performance Report, 2009-10, a copy of which has been placed in the Libraries of the House. It can also be found at:

http://www.rssb.co.uk/sitecollectiondocuments/pdf/reports/ASPR_2009_10_Full_Report.pdf

Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation

Heidi Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what timetable he has set for his consultation on the renewable transport fuel obligation; and if he will make a statement; [31129]

(2) what plans he has to review the Government's policy on biofuels. [31371]

Norman Baker: Amendments to the Renewable Transport Fuel (RTFO) Order 2007 are being considered to implement both the transport elements of the renewable energy directive (RED) and aspects of the closely related fuel quality directive (FQD). It is our firm intention to consult soon on proposals to amend the RTFO and set out a timetable for implementation.

The RED contains a requirement that the European Commission undertake a wide ranging review of the directive by 31 December 2014 and propose amendments if appropriate. Any such proposal may lead to further revisions of the RTFO.

Rolling Stock

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to roll out on-train metering across the rail network. [29268]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport recognises the benefits of on-train meters in helping train operators manage their energy consumption more effectively. We are working closely with the Office of Rail Regulation, Network Rail and train operators to facilitate the roll-out of on-train metering. Installation of the necessary equipment is supported by Network Rail's £8 million safety and environment fund.

The Office of Rail Regulation is currently reviewing Virgin Trains West Coast application to opt in to on-train metering. Virgin Trains is already supplying metered energy data to Network Rail and will be billed based on these data if the application is approved. The Office of Rail Regulation encourages the use of on-train metering, but also has to make sure the Virgin Trains application does not have unreasonable financial implications for other train operators.

London Midland, First Scotrail and First Capital Connect have indicated that they plan to move to metered billing from April 2011. The Department for Transport has specified the fitment of energy meters to 28 trains as part of the Southern franchise.

The Office of Rail Regulation recently commissioned a review of opportunities to improve electrical energy efficiency. The executive summary of the resulting electrical efficiency summary report is available at:

www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/independent-reporter-b-amc-121110.pdf

The Department for Transport is working with the Office of Rail Regulation and the wider industry to respond to the review's recommendations. This will include consideration of further incentives and penalties for the next control period (2014-19) to encourage the fitment of on-train meters.

Rolling Stock: Procurement

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what class of rail travel will be provided in each of the new rail carriages which have been ordered. [28592]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 3 December 2010]*: The Department for Transport does not normally specify this as it is a commercial matter for the train operator concerned.

Sea Rescue

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent meetings he has had with representatives of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in Northern Ireland on the modernisation of the coastguard. [31948]

Mike Penning: Our proposals for the modernisation of the coastguard are now the subject of a 14-week consultation. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency plans formal negotiations with the trade unions, as well as a series of public consultation meetings and staff briefings.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reasons his Department's announcement on the modernisation of the coastguard has not been made according to the planned timetable. [31949]

Mike Penning: Our proposals have been developed over a period of time. Once we were satisfied that these would deliver a modernised coastguard for the 21st century, we made a written ministerial statement to the House.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to publish his Department's proposals for the modernisation of the coastguard. [31950]

Mike Penning: I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made to the House on 16 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 133-34WS.

Taxis: Licensing

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether local authorities are required to determine the suitability of an individual to hold a *(a)* hackney and *(b)* private hire licence; and if he will make a statement. [31507]

Norman Baker: The legislation governing taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) licensing places a statutory duty on local licensing authorities to ensure that any person to whom they grant a taxi or PHV driver licence is a fit and proper person. Local authorities have responsibility for deciding what constitutes "fit and proper", for the standards that they impose for the granting of a licence and for subsequent enforcement.

The Department for Transport has provided best practice guidance to assist local licensing authorities in carrying out their taxi licensing responsibilities. The guidance includes advice about assessing taxi driver licence applicants. It can be found on the Department's website at:

www.dft.gov.uk

Thameslink: King's Lynn

Elizabeth Truss: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many direct services from King's Lynn to London he expects to be maintained following the Thameslink upgrade. [30939]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 15 December 2010]*: It is not anticipated that the number of direct trains from King's Lynn to London will alter as a result of the Thameslink upgrade.

Train Operating Companies: Compensation

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will bring forward proposals to require train operating companies to introduce a compensatory scheme to those passengers unable to access a seat on their journey. [29639]

Mrs Villiers: The cost of introducing a compensation scheme for passengers who have been unable to access a seat would be reflected in increased franchising costs for the taxpayer. There would also be significant issues to resolve with regard to how such a scheme could be administered.

The cost of providing a seat for every passenger on every journey, regardless of distance travelled is likely to be very high given the peaks in demand that occur in the system.

However, the Government remain committed to increasing the carrying capacity of the rail network and have recently confirmed major infrastructure schemes such as Crossrail and Thameslink and that some 2100 new carriages will be in service on the network by 2019.

Waterloo Station

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with *(a)* representatives of business organisations and *(b)* individual businesses on the future of Waterloo International terminal. [30575]

Mrs Villiers: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer given on 9 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 407W.

West Coast Railway Line: Overcrowding

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received on his decision not to approve planned extra carriages on west coast main line train services; and if he will make a statement. [27776]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport has ordered 106 additional Pendolino vehicles for use on the west coast main line. These are under construction and the first vehicles are now being delivered for testing. Our long-term plans for the west coast corridor include a major increase in capacity with the construction of a new high speed rail network.

The Government received a proposal from Virgin to extend its franchise by two years which included a proposal to purchase a further 42 vehicles. I decided not to pursue the offer in order to maximise the passenger and taxpayer benefits through a competitive process to determine the future of the west coast franchise. The Department for Transport has received various representations on capacity issues on west coast.

HEALTH

Addison Lee

Julie Elliott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* public bodies for which it is responsible contract services from Addison Lee private taxi hire company. [30706]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department does not have a contract with Addison Lee.

The Department's arm's-length body sector is made up of nine executive non-departmental public bodies, one executive agency and eight special health authorities. For the purpose of this question, only the non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) that currently exist are included.

One NDPB, the Health Protection Agency, does have a contract with Addison Lee under an Office of Government Commerce (OGC) framework agreement. Although not a contract, some NDPBs do however have accounts with Addison Lee for financial reasons. Details for all the NDPBs are included in the following table:

Non-departmental public body	*Has contract with Addison Lee? (Yes/No)*	*Additional Information*
Alcohol Education and Research Council	No	None
Appointments Commission	No	None

Non-departmental public body	*Has contract with Addison Lee? (Yes/No)*	*Additional Information*
Care Quality Commission	No	CQC does not currently have a contract with Addison Lee but does have an account that is used by its London office
Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence	No	None
General Social Care Council	No	GSCC uses Addison Lee on an ad-hoc basis
Health Protection Agency	Yes	HPA uses an OGC framework contract with Addison Lee for the provision of taxis
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority	No	HFEA does not currently have a contract with Addison Lee but does have an account with it.
Human Tissue Authority	No	None
Monitor	No	None

Advisory Group for National Specialised Services

Mr George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether treatments assessed by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence will be able to enter specialised commissioning through the new Advisory Group for National Specialised Services. [31053]

Mr Simon Burns: We would not normally expect a treatment to be referred to the Advisory Group for National Specialised Services (AGNSS) if it was considered appropriate for appraisal by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). NICE can indicate if it believes a topic being considered for appraisal would more appropriately be assessed by AGNSS.

Autism: Research

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research his Department has evaluated on *(a)* a genetic link to autism and *(b)* potential treatments for autism associated with genetic conditions. [31955]

Paul Burstow: The Medical Research Council (MRC) funds a broad portfolio of research relating to autism including research on the genetic links to the condition.

Funded research projects span a number of years, many of which are still ongoing. Examples of MRC-funded research in this area include:

The Autism Genome Project led by Professor A Monaco, University of Oxford—which began March 2007 and concluded in September 2010. This project consists of 120 scientists from more than 60 institutions and 11 countries who have formed a first-of-its-kind autism genetics consortium. Support for this collaboration was brokered by Medical Research Council.

Professor F Happe, Institute of Psychiatry—A population-based twin-study of autism spectrum disorders—February 2007-November 2010.

Dr M D Spencer, University of Cambridge—A structural and functional imaging study of autism and its extended phenotype—December 2008-November 2012.

Professor S Baron-Cohen, University of Cambridge—Autistic traits, autism spectrum conditions, and foetal testosterone—July 2007-December 2011.

Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Trust: Public Expenditure

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the change in funding to Birmingham children's hospital as a result of the outcome of the comprehensive spending review in each of the next five years. [31122]

Mr Simon Burns: No estimate has been made of changes to Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust's funding as a result of the outcome of the comprehensive spending review.

While not directly related to the comprehensive spending review, Departmental officials have held discussions in recent weeks with representatives from Birmingham children's hospital and other providers of specialised services for children. These discussions have focused on arrangements for the 2011-12 Payment by Results national tariff, through which specialist trusts receive a proportion of their total funding.

Following the conclusion of these discussions, the Secretary of State for Health announced on 7 December his intention to set the top-up payment for specialised services for children at 60% above the tariff price and increase the number of procedures that will attract the top-up payment.

Cancer: Orphan Treatments

Mr George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of standard treatment appraisal methodologies for appraising ultra-orphan treatments for cancer; what assessment he has made of the effects of using such methodologies on the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's capacity to develop guidance for such treatments; and if he will make a statement. [31054]

Mr Simon Burns: We have made no such assessment.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is an independent body and is responsible for the development of its own methodologies. NICE has appraised a number of drugs for the treatment of cancers with very small patient populations and has been able to recommend some as a clinically and cost effective use of national health service resources.

NICE issued supplementary advice to its Appraisal Committees in 2009 to clarify the circumstances in which it might be appropriate to recommend potentially life-extending treatments licensed for terminal illnesses affecting small numbers of patients that would not normally be recommended through the application of NICE'S standard technology appraisal methods. The supplementary advice is available on NICE's website at:

http://www.nice.org.uk/aboutnice/howwework/devnicetech/technologyappraisalprocessguides/guidetothemethodsoftechnologyappraisal.jsp?domedia=l&mid=88ACDAE5-19B9-E0B5-D422589714A8EC6D

Care Costs

Dr Whiteford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of people in each local authority area who require assistance to meet their care costs in 2010-11. [31196]

Paul Burstow: The NHS Information Centre collects and publishes the number of people receiving services funded wholly or partly by Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities (CASSRs). The most recently published data are for 2009-10 and are provisional. These data are shown in the following table. Final data for 2009-10 will be published in 2011.

Data for 2010-11 will not be published until late 2011 and no forecasts are available.

Clients receiving services during the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010[1]

	CASSR	*Number*
102	Cumbria	19,920
104	Northumberland	16,815
106	Gateshead	7,210
107	Newcastle upon Tyne	9,615
108	North Tyneside	7,185
109	South Tyneside	6,605
110	Sunderland	10,685
111	Hartlepool UA	5,060
112	Middlesbrough UA	7,045
113	Redcar and Cleveland UA	7,005
114	Stockton on Tees UA	8,050
116	Durham	19,645
117	Darlington UA	3,855
204	Barnsley	6,635
205	Doncaster	9,465
206	Rotherham	8,050
207	Sheffield	16,630
209	Bradford	15,405
210	Calderdale	7,175
211	Kirklees	16,410
212	Leeds	17,620
213	Wakefield	9,280
214	East Riding of Yorkshire UA	15,330
215	Kingston upon Hull UA	10,130
216	North East Lincolnshire UA	7,465
217	North Lincolnshire UA	5,690
218	North Yorkshire	25,810
219	York UA	6,890
304	Bolton	9,040
305	Bury	6,410
306	Manchester	10,165
307	Oldham	7,530
308	Rochdale	6,905
309	Salford	9,040
310	Stockport	8,330
311	Tameside	11,455
312	Trafford	8,650
313	Wigan	10,490
315	Knowsley	5,495
316	Liverpool	15,690
317	Sefton	11,965
318	St. Helens	6,155
319	Wirral	10,385
321	Halton UA	4,825
322	Warrington UA	7,490
323	Lancashire	37,285
324	Blackburn with Darwen UA	3,900
325	Blackpool UA	5,450
326	Cheshire East UA	11,990
327	Cheshire West and Chester UA	10,890
404	Warwickshire	15,115
406	Birmingham	28,855
407	Coventry	7,615
408	Dudley	12,120
409	Sandwell	11,630
410	Solihull	6,700
411	Walsall	8,445
412	Wolverhampton	6,535
413	Staffordshire	27,490
414	Stoke on Trent UA	10,645
415	Herefordshire UA	6,460
416	Worcestershire	16,875
417	Shropshire	11,980
418	Telford and the Wrekin UA	5,940
503	Lincolnshire	21,975
504	Northamptonshire	16,170
506	Derbyshire	27,090
507	Derby UA	7,865
508	Leicestershire	17,515
509	Leicester UA	7,895
510	Rutland UA	1,345
511	Nottinghamshire	27,595
512	Nottingham UA	9,490
606	Hertfordshire	28,835
607	Norfolk	31,530
608	Oxfordshire	17,545
609	Suffolk	18,020
611	Luton UA	4,480
612	Buckinghamshire	14,495
613	Milton Keynes UA	5,630
514	Bracknell Forest UA	3,655
615	West Berkshire UA	4,890
616	Reading UA	4,615
617	Slough UA	3,490
618	Windsor and Maidenhead UA	4,540
619	Wokingham UA	3,150
620	Essex	48,165
621	Southend on Sea UA	7,195
622	Thurrock UA	3,540
623	Cambridgeshire	15,845
624	Peterborough UA	5,900
625	Bedford UA	4,805
626	Central Bedfordshire UA	6,570
702	Camden	6,660
703	Greenwich	5,730
704	Hackney	5,575
705	Hammersmith and Fulham	4,740
706	Islington	5,380
707	Kensington and Chelsea	6,375
708	Lambeth	8,755
709	Lewisham	7,040
710	Southwark	5,215
711	Tower Hamlets	6,375
712	Wandsworth	5,450
713	Westminster	7,090
714	City of London	295
716	Barking and Dagenham	6,430
717	Barnet	7,365
718	Bexley	7,595

Clients receiving services during the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010[1]

	CASSR	*Number*
719	Brent	7,075
720	Bromley	8,480
721	Croydon	10,515
722	Ealing	10,020
723	Enfield	10,575
724	Haringey	5,745
725	Harrow	6,820
726	Havering	6,825
727	Hillingdon	5,770
728	Hounslow	6,355
729	Kingston upon Thames	3,410
730	Merton	4,950
731	Newham	6,070
732	Redbridge	7,790
733	Richmond upon Thames	4,630
734	Sutton	6,395
735	Waltham Forest	4,010
803	Isle of Wight UA	4,580
805	Surrey	31,095
807	West Sussex	27,025
809	Dorset	13,255
810	Bournemouth UA	6,265
811	Poole UA	7,020
812	Hampshire	45,510
813	Portsmouth UA	6,815
814	Southampton UA	9,850
815	East Sussex	18,525
816	Brighton and Hove UA	9,350
817	Wiltshire	16,670
819	Swindon UA	6,170
820	Kent	46,080
821	Medway Towns UA	8,665
902	Cornwall	18,910
904	Gloucestershire	25,775
905	Somerset	33,460
906	Isles of Scilly	55
908	Bath and North East Somerset UA	5,325
909	Bristol UA	14,550
910	North Somerset UA	6,575
911	South Gloucestershire UA	8,835
912	Devon	26,790
913	Plymouth UA	11,010
914	Torbay UA	6,485
	England	1,697,595

[1] Provisional

Note:

England total may not add up due to rounding.

Cataracts: Surgery

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2010, *Official Report,* column 890W, on cataracts: surgery, what his policy is on providing a wider choice of treatments for cataract surgery patients under his proposed reforms to NHS commissioning; and if he will make a statement. [30818]

Mr Simon Burns: As explained in the answer on 1 December 2010, *Official Report,* column 890W, we are currently consulting on proposals for giving patients and service users greater choice and control over their care and we will publish our response along with more detailed policy proposals early next year.

Death: Winter

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the factors which contributed to the change in the number of excess winter deaths between 2008-09 and 2009-10. [31279]

Anne Milton: Estimates and analysis of excess winter mortality are provided annually by the Office for National Statistics. These are available at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=10805

The most recent data for winter 2009-10 (provisional) show that there were an estimated 25,400 excess winter deaths in England and Wales in 2009-10. This is a decrease of 30% compared with figures for 2008-09.

Although excess winter deaths are associated with low temperatures, conditions directly relating to cold, such as hypothermia, are not the main cause. The majority of additional winter deaths are caused by cerebrovascular diseases, ischaemic heart disease and respiratory diseases.

Luciana Berger: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the likely number of excess winter deaths in 2010-11. [31567]

Anne Milton: Estimates and analysis of excess winter mortality are provided annually by the Office for National Statistics. These are available at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=10805

The most recent data for winter 2009-10 (provisional) show that there were an estimated 25,400 excess winter deaths in England and Wales in 2009-10. This is a decrease of 30% compared with figures for 2008-09.

Dementia: Health Services

Mr MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will bring forward proposals to require GP consortia to provide full and adequately financed care for all patients diagnosed with Alzheimer's and other dementia-related conditions. [30707]

Paul Burstow: The White Paper "Liberating the NHS" set out our proposals to devolve power and responsibility for commissioning services to local consortia of general practitioner (GP) practices, supported by the creation of an NHS Commissioning Board. The Government have consulted on how best to implement the White Paper and on 15 December, published their response.

GP consortia will be responsible for commissioning the great majority of national health service services to include those for patients with dementia. We will expect consortia to involve relevant health and social care professionals from all sectors in helping design care pathways or care packages for those with dementia that achieve more integrated delivery of care, higher quality, and more efficient use of NHS resources. This will create an effective dialogue across all health and, where appropriate, social care professionals

The Operating Framework for the NHS published on 15 December sets out that, during 2011-12, NHS organisations are expected to make progress on the implementation of the National Dementia Strategy. It also states that primary care trusts must work with GP consortia to develop their Operating Plans, providing support for the consortia development process and empowering consortia to take on new responsibilities when they are ready to do so.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30753]

Mr Simon Burns: The number of invoices processed by the Department in the 12 month period from 1 December 2009 to 30 November 2010 is 63,233. This figure is drawn from the Department's accounts payable system and includes only those invoices paid directly to suppliers by the Department. Payments by arm's-length bodies and executive agencies are therefore excluded.

Departmental Consultants

Mr MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what contracts his Department has entered into for the provision of consultancy services since May 2010; and what the monetary value is of each such contract. [29730]

Mr Simon Burns: In line with Government efficiency controls, details of consultancy services contracts over £20,000 are now routinely published.

The latest publication, for the period 24 May to 31 October, was published on the Department's website on 16 December 2010 at:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Aboutus/HowDHworks/Transparency/index.htm

Departmental Pay

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been paid to officials in his Department and its non-departmental bodies in bonuses and other payments in addition to salary in each year since 1997; how many officials received such payments; and what the monetary value was of the largest 20 payments made in each such year. [27489]

Mr Simon Burns: The information requested is given in tables for the Department of Health and its non-departmental bodies.

For the Department itself, non-consolidated performance payments (NCPPs) are an integral part of the Department's reward strategy for all its staff. They have to be re-earned each year and do not add to future pay bill costs. These payments are used to reward outstanding performance and behaviours in delivering the Department's agenda.

Non-consolidated performance payments are funded from within existing pay bill controls. In the case of the senior civil service, the percentage of pay bill set aside for performance-related awards is based on recommendations from the independent Senior Salaries Review Body. For staff at administrative officer to grade 6, the percentage of pay bill set aside was determined by a three-year pay settlement introduced in 2008-09.

The information is set out in the associated tables which have been placed in the Library. Details are not available for the core Department and its agency the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency before 2004-05 because of a change in service provider.

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what allowances and payments in addition to salary were available to officials in his Department and its non-departmental bodies in each year since 1997; and what the monetary value was of payments and allowances of each type in each such year. [27490]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department has a number of allowances and payments in addition to basic pay. These include scarce skills allowances and overtime. Different allowances and payments exist in the Department's non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs). The total payments for the Department and its NDPBs are shown in tables which have been placed in the Library. The Department moved to a new pay and grading system for staff below senior civil service in 2006 with much less reliance on allowances.

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31227]

Mr Simon Burns: All the Department's employees (permanent civil servants and those on fixed term appointments) are paid at rates for which the hourly equivalent is above the current "London Living wage" of £7.85 per hour.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31183]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department has a wide variety of areas of expenditure which exposes it to different levels of VAT and the amount that can be recovered. Information on the amount of irrecoverable VAT (the amount affected by the increase in standard rate) is not collected as there is no business need for this information.

A high-level estimate, based on the best currently available information, indicates that the effect of each percentage point increase in the standard rate of VAT is around £130 million per year.

Diabetes: Finance

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations he has received on access to *(a)* consultant-led care and *(b)* diabetic consumables funded by the NHS for diabetics; what proportion of the NHS budget is allocated to diabetic care; and if he will make a statement. [31031]

Paul Burstow: The Secretary of State for Health has not received any recent specific representations on consultant-led diabetes care. All people with diabetes should have access to a multidisciplinary diabetes specialist team, including a consultant in diabetes, when necessary. Treatment for people with diabetes must be tailored to each person's individual needs at that particular time in his or her life.

It is for national health service organisations to determine the needs of their local population and to allocate resources appropriately to meet these needs. Diabetes is a complex condition that can affect every part of the body, which mean that it is difficult to calculate its exact cost to the NHS.

Disability: Children

Tom Blenkinsop: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding his Department plans to allocate to the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme in *(a)* 2011-12, *(b)* 2012-13 and *(c)* 2013-14. [29715]

Anne Milton: The Aiming High for Disabled Children programme, launched by the previous Government, will continue until the end of March 2011. The Childhood and Families Taskforce announced by the Deputy Prime Minister (Nick Clegg) in July this year is looking at ways to provide greater support for disabled children. Also £20 million is being made available to support respite care, funding recycled from the ending of the Government's contribution to Children's Trust funds.

The recently announced Special Educational Needs Green Paper also demonstrates that disabled children are a priority for the coalition Government. The important role of carers has also been recognised with the recent publication of a Carers Strategy in November. Government will provide local authorities with £800 million over the next four years to fund short breaks for families with disabled children.

The NHS White Paper "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS" will also provide a real opportunity for ill and disabled children and their families by placing patients firmly at the heart of everything the national health service does.

Domestic Violence: Public Expenditure

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding his Department has allocated for support to victims of domestic violence in each year of the comprehensive spending review period; and if he will make a statement. [31259]

Anne Milton: The spending review increased health spending in cash terms by 10.3% by 2014-15. All patients, including victims of domestic violence, will benefit from this additional investment in health care and from the White Paper reforms.

On 15 December 2010, the Department announced increased total funding for primary care trusts (PCTs) of 3% in cash terms, including PCT recurrent allocations.

PCT recurrent revenue allocations are not broken down by policy or service area. Once allocated, it is for PCTs to commission the services they require to meet the health care needs of their local populations, taking account of both local and national priorities.

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding his Department has allocated for support to victims of domestic violence in each year since 2005. [31258]

Anne Milton: Support for victims of domestic violence may be provided by universal and specialist health services, which are commissioned by primary care trusts (PCTs). PCT recurrent revenue allocations are not broken down by policy or service area. Once allocated, it is for PCTs to commission the services they require to meet the health care needs of their local populations, taking account of both local and national priorities.

In addition to PCT allocations, the Department has also funded voluntary and charitable organisations to deliver a range of projects that support victims of domestic violence. This includes:

£500,000 grant payment to the National Domestic Violence Helpline in March 2009; and

£439,530 was committed to fund specialist services run by voluntary and charitable organisations through the Innovation, Excellence and Service Development (IESD) fund. Applications for the 2011-12 IESD fund are currently being assessed.

Headaches: Health Services

Mr Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much the NHS spent on interventions for headache and migraine sufferers in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement; [31481]

(2) if he will take steps to provide training to general practitioners on the prevention and detection of migraine and headaches among patients. [31483]

Paul Burstow: Data on national health service expenditure on interventions for headache and migraine sufferers are not collected.

Training of general practitioners in the prevention and detection of headaches and migraines is the responsibility of the Royal College of General Practitioners.

Headaches: Research

Mr Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will promote research into the causes of migraines and headaches. [31485]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) welcomes applications for support into any aspect of human health, including migraine and headache. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the scientific quality of the proposals made. In all disease areas, the amount of NIHR funding depends on the volume and quality of scientific activity.

The NIHR-funded University College London Hospitals Biomedical Research Centre is undertaking research on headache and pain. A five-year budget of £3.7 million has been allocated to this work.

Health Visitors: Finance

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department plans to allocate funding to meet the commitment contained in the 2010 Drugs Strategy to recruit 4,200 extra health visitors by 2015. [32061]

Anne Milton: Spending review announcements in late October this year included confirmation of new investment in health visitors within the national health service settlement. The intention to increase the work force by 4,200 was also referenced in the Government's Drugs Strategy, published on 8 December.

Hepatitis

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what general health problems his Department has identified among people with hepatitis C infections which were attributable to the prior infection; and if he will make a statement. [31501]

Anne Milton: Acute hepatitis C infection usually occurs without causing any or only mild symptoms.

Chronic hepatitis C infection may be associated with a range of non-specific symptoms such as fatigue, malaise, bodily pain and joint symptoms. Chronic infection has also been associated with a range of specific conditions affecting parts of the body other than the liver, such as impaired cognitive function. A proportion of patients with chronic infection will go on to develop cirrhosis and primary liver cancer, and there may be a need for liver transplantation some cases.

Patients who have cleared chronic hepatitis C infection through drug therapy, or much more rarely without such treatment, do not usually experience ongoing symptoms, although patients who have already developed cirrhosis remain at risk of further complications.

Hip Replacement: Surgery

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hip replacement operations have taken place in *(a)* city of Manchester, *(b)* Greater Manchester, *(c)* north-west England and *(d)* England in each month since April 2010. [31470]

Mr Simon Burns: Information specific to "hip operations" is not available. The provisional count of finished consultant episodes where a main or secondary procedure was "hip replacement" is available in the following table. It has been broken down by the primary care trust (PCT)/strategic health authority (SHA) area of the patients' treatment between April 2010 and August 2010:

Provisional[1] count of finished consultant episodes[2] where a main or secondary procedure[3] was "hip replacement"[4] broken down by the PCT/SHA area of the patients treatment, April 2010 to August 2010—Activity in English NHS hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector

	April	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*
England	8,382	8,850	9,231	9,366	8,666
of which were treated in:					
North West SHA	1,150	1,118	1,221	1,196	1,151
of which were treated in					
Manchester PCT	132	133	146	127	149
Other Greater Manchester PCTs	156	152	152	184	167
Salford PCT	18	29	28	40	25
Stockport PCT	58	61	50	59	56
Bolton PCT	26	21	38	28	40
Tameside and Glossop PCT	22	20	19	20	27
Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale PCT	11	9	11	23	12
Trafford PCT	22	12	6	14	8

[1] *Provisional data* The data are provisional and may be incomplete or contain errors for which no adjustments have yet been made. Counts produced from provisional data are likely to be lower than those generated for the same period in the final dataset. This shortfall will be most pronounced in the final month of the latest period, i.e. November from the (month 9) April to November extract. It is also probable that clinical data are not complete, which may in particular affect the last two months of any given period. There may also be errors due to coding inconsistencies that have not yet been investigated and corrected.

[2] *Finished Consultant Episode (FCE)* FCE is a continuous period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. FCEs are counted against the year in which they end. Figures do not represent the number of different patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the same stay in hospital or in different stays in the same year.

[3] *Number of episodes with a (named) main or secondary procedure* The number of episodes where the procedure (or intervention) was recorded in any of the 24 (12 from 2002-03 to 2006-07 and four prior to 2002-03) procedure fields in a hospital episode statistics (HES) record. A record is only included once in each count, even if the procedure is recorded in more than one procedure field of the record. Note that more procedures are carried out than episodes with a main or secondary procedure. For example, patients undergoing a "cataract operation" would tend to have at least two procedures—removal of the faulty lens and the fitting of a new one—counted in a single episode.

[4] *OPCS Procedure codes used to define "Hip replacement"* W37 Total prosthetic replacement of hip joint using cement W38 Total prosthetic replacement of hip joint not using cement W39 Other total prosthetic replacement of hip joint W93 Hybrid prosthetic replacement of hip joint using cemented acetabular component W94 Hybrid prosthetic replacement of hip joint using cemented femoral component W95 Hybrid prosthetic replacement of hip joint using cement W46 Prosthetic replacement of head of femur using cement W47 Prosthetic replacement of head of femur not using cement W48 Other prosthetic replacement of head of femur

Note:

Oldham PCT and Bury PCT are also considered in Greater Manchester but returned no episodes with a main or secondary procedure of "hip replacement."

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), The NHS Information Centre for health and social care.

The term "hip operations" is considered too broad by the clinical coding team at Connecting for Health, therefore counts of "hip replacements" have been provided.

Hospitals: Waiting Lists

Mr Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS hospitals did not meet the NHS Constitution waiting time target of 18 weeks for each reporting period from 2006 to 2010. [30676]

Mr Simon Burns: The NHS Constitution right for patients

"to access services within maximum waiting times, or for the national health service to take all reasonable steps to offer you a range of alternative providers if this is not possible" has been in place since 1 April 2010. NHS commissioners have a legal duty to commission services that meet maximum waiting time standards and to offer redress to patients who have waited longer if patients request this. The Department does not collect information centrally on patients who seek to exercise their right to redress under the NHS Constitution.

The Department collects and publishes monthly referral to treatment consultant-led waiting times for each NHS provider. These are available from January 2007 for patients admitted to hospital and from August 2007 for patients whose treatment did not require an admission. These data include information on how many patients waited more than 18 weeks before starting treatment and this information is contained in tables which have been placed in the Library. The Department does not collect information on the reasons why patients waited longer then 18 weeks but this will include those patients who chose to wait longer for personal or social reasons, for example to work around family or work commitments, or where waiting longer was clinically appropriate.

Kidneys: Transplant Surgery

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he made of the number of *(a)* female, *(b)* male and *(c)* child patients who died while waiting for a kidney transplant in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [30933]

Anne Milton: The figures for the number of patients dying while waiting for a kidney transplant should not be seen in isolation: although the number of deaths on the kidney waiting list has remained fairly static over the last five years, this needs to be seen in the context of an increase in patients being added to the waiting list along with the increase, year on year, in both donors and transplants.

Number on patients who died while on the waiting list for a kidney transplant

				Number on waiting list who have died while waiting for a kidney transplant			
	Total number on kidney waiting list as of 31 March	*Total number of deceased and living kidney donors*	*Total number of transplants from deceased and living kidney donors*	*Male*	*Female*	*Paediatric*	*Total*
2005-06	5,863	1,311	1,915	263	174	2	439
2006-07	6,481	1,455	2,130	233	179	3	415
2007-08	6,980	1,620	2,284	252	168	1	421
2008-09	7,190	1,786	2,575	262	185	2	449
2009-10	7,183	1,968	2,694	264	171	3	438

This table includes patients who donated or received solely kidneys or kidneys and other organs.

Maternity Services

Dr Wollaston: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department has taken to increase the *(a)* availability and *(b)* standard of provision for psychological and social support for new mothers of pre-term babies since 2009. [31047]

Paul Burstow: More and more people across England are getting access to psychological therapies for the most common mental health problems, such as anxiety disorders or depression. About 140 new psychological therapy services are now up and running around the country and by March 2011 60% of primary care trusts will have an Improving Access to Psychological Therapies service. 900,000 extra people with depression and/or anxiety disorders will have been seen in the first three years of the programme. Some 3,600 more therapists will have been employed in the same period, already meeting the programme's March 2011 target.

The Health settlement in the spending review included funding to expand access to talking therapies. The money will complete the roll-out of the nationwide training programme and services which began in 2008 and begin to extend the benefits of talking therapies to the young, the elderly, those with serious mental illness and those who have anxiety disorders or depression alongside long-term physical health conditions such as diabetes, heart or lung disease. By March 2011, the roll-out will achieve 60% geographical coverage of England. The spending review settlement will complete this by 2014-15.

With regard to social support, the coalition programme committed the Government to reforming the system of social care in England to provide much more control to individuals and their carers. On 16 November 2010 we published "A Vision for Adult Social Care: Capable Communities and Active Citizens", which sets the context for the future direction of adult social care in England and a copy has been placed in the Library.

The Vision focuses on the Government commitments to:

break down barriers between health and social care funding to incentivise preventative action;

extend the greater rollout of personal budgets to give people and their carers more control and purchasing power; and

use direct payments to carers and better community-based provision to improve access to respite care.

We want to make services more personalised, more preventative and more focused on delivering the best outcomes for those who use them. The document also states that councils should provide personal budgets, preferably as a direct payment, for everyone eligible, by 2013, and develop the Big Society, with more local preventative activity to support people's independence.

On 4 November 2010, the social care sector published "Think Local, Act Personal: Next Steps for Transforming Adult Social Care", which sets out the sector's commitment to moving forward with personalisation and community-based support. To support its implementation, a number of best practice documents have been published and are available on the Putting People First website at:

www.puttingpeoplefirst.org.uk

Memory Clinics

Paul Blomfield: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS memory clinics there are in each primary care trust area; and how many of these have been set up since the launch of the national dementia strategy in February 2009. [29763]

Paul Burstow: The Department does not hold the data requested centrally. We will as part of the national audit of dementia services be collecting data on dementia services including memory assessment services. The first results from this are expected at the end of the year.

National health service organisations should already be working with partners to implement the national dementia strategy. Localities are asked to provide information that helps those with dementia and their families or carers to understand what is available in local services and the level of quality and outcomes that they can expect.

National Specialised Services Advisory Group

Kevin Brennan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate he has made of the likely annual budget of the Advisory Group for National Specialised Services for the appraisal of ultra-orphan drugs; [31548]

(2) what account he expects the Advisory Group for National Specialised Services to take of reports by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence; [31549]

(3) whether medicines for ultra-orphan diseases which have been rejected by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence will be referred to the Advisory Group for National Specialised Services. [31550]

Mr Simon Burns: There is no specific funding identified for the Advisory Group for National Specialised Services (AGNSS) to undertake consideration of drugs for very rare conditions. It is part of the running costs for the secretariat to the group. Funds to run AGNSS are agreed on an annual basis and Ministers are currently considering the running costs for 2011-12.

AGNSS will take into account any relevant guidance produced by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) where it relates to nationally commissioned services.

Drugs that have been appraised by NICE are not eligible for consideration by AGNSS.

NHS 111

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to publish a report on the outcome of his Department's pilots of the 111 service. [30844]

Mr Simon Burns: The final evaluation report on the NHS 111 pilots will be published by spring 2012.

NHS Litigation Authority: Claims

Caroline Nokes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the liabilities arising from claims received by the NHS Litigation Authority since 2000 in respect of *(a)* the time taken and *(b)* failures to carry out a caesarean section. [31000]

Mr Simon Burns: I have been advised by the national health service litigation authority that the estimate of the liabilities arising from claims where a delay in performing caesarean section is mentioned in the claims is £52.3 million. The estimate of the liabilities arising from claims where failure to perform a caesarean section is mentioned in the claim is £49 million.

NHS Trusts: Finance

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which hospital trusts have a financial position supported by non-recurrent financial support; and how much each has received in such support in 2010-11 to date. [30845]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department does not provide any non-recurrent revenue financial support to support the financial position reported by hospital trusts.

The Department is able to issue non-recurrent cash support, in the form of interest bearing, working capital loans to hospital national health service trusts and foundation trusts. These loans are only approved where hospital trusts are able to afford the repayments

The Department is also able to issue capital investment loans to hospital NHS trusts and foundation trusts. However, due to the long-term nature of the investment they are supporting, they are not considered to be non-recurrent financial support.

Hospital NHS trusts also have the facility to borrow cash from the Department on a temporary basis in the form of public dividend capital. This will often occur in advance of a working capital loan or capital investment loan.

At a local level, strategic health authorities may provide financial support to hospital trusts for strategic investments or other local circumstances.

The following tables 1 and 2 detail the working capital loans that have been issued or agreed during the financial year 2010-11, and the temporary borrowing issued during the financial year 2010-11.

Table 3 show the amounts of non-recurrent financial support that has been provided to hospital trusts during the financial year 2010-11, as notified to the Department by the strategic health authorities.

Hospital foundation trusts are autonomous organisations and are accountable to Monitor, their independent regulator. Unlike hospital NHS trusts, they are exempt from supplying certain information to the Department. Therefore the information in the tables in respect of foundation trusts is only on working capital loans provided by the Department in 2010-11 and local financial support as notified by the strategic health authorities.

Table 1: Working capital loans for hospitals issued or agreed in 2010-11

	Value of working capital loan (£ million)
East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust	6.0
Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Foundation Trust	[1]18.0
Winchester and Eastleigh Healthcare NHS Trust	6.5

[1] This has been agreed but has not yet been issued to the trust

Table 2: Temporary borrowing for hospital trusts issued in 2010-11

	Value of temporary borrowing (£ million)
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	9.0
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	10.0
Newham University Hospital NHS Trust	2.1
North Bristol NHS Trust	8.0
North Cumbria University Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	2.5
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	8.6
South London Healthcare NHS Trust	38.8
The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	4.6
The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	3.0
Weston Area Health NHS Trust	3.9

Table 3: Local non-recurrent financial support provided to hospital trusts in 2010-11

	Value of revenue support (£ million)
Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	2.1
Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust	10.0
Newham University Hospitals NHS Trust	1.5
North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust	5.4
Scarborough and North East Yorkshire Healthcare NHS Trust	7.0
Oxford Radcliffe Hospital NHS Trust	1.5
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust	9.0
St George's Healthcare NHS Trust	4.0
University Hospital of North Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust	10.0
Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust	4.3
Winchester and Eastleigh Healthcare NHS Trust	3.0

North East England

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which Ministers in his Department have visited the north-east since their appointment. [31739]

Mr Simon Burns: The Secretary of State for Health, my right hon. Friend the Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr Lansley) and my noble Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Earl Howe), have both visited the north-east since appointment.

Orphan Treatments

Mr George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will instruct the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to give greater consideration to the relevance of low patient population numbers in its appraisal processes for ultra-orphan drugs. [31052]

Mr Simon Burns: We have no plans to do so. As an independent body, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is responsible for developing its technology appraisal methodology. NICE has appraised treatments for conditions with very small patient populations where they have met the published criteria for referral.

The estimated size of the patient population for a treatment is considered alongside other factors in assessing whether it is suitable for appraisal. The overarching consideration in determining whether a topic should be referred to NICE is whether NICE guidance can add value.

NICE consults periodically on its technology appraisal processes and methods, and last did so in 2008-09.

Primary Care Trusts: Conditions of Employment

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether those GP commissioning consortia which employ staff previously employed by primary care trusts will take on associated TUPE liabilities. [31899]

Mr Simon Burns: The application of Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) will always be a matter of law based on the individual circumstances of the particular transfer. Employers will need to establish the legal position for their own specific transfer situations. In circumstances where TUPE does not strictly apply, public sector transfers may be covered by the Cabinet Office "Staff Transfers in the Public Sector Statement of Practice" (COSOP), where the transfer is effected on terms that are overall no less favourable than if TUPE had applied.

Equally, staff transfer schemes established by the Secretary of State may transfer staff on similar or the same terms as if TUPE had applied. These are sometimes referred to as "TUPE-like" terms.

Where TUPE or COSOP applies or a staff transfer scheme is used, the terms and conditions of staff will be protected.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the removal of the two-tier TUPE code applies to primary care trust (PCT) staff transferring from PCTs to GP consortia. [31903]

Mr Simon Burns: The "two-tier" code (Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Public Sector Service Contracts) would not have applied to the transfer of staff from primary care trusts to general practitioner consortia, which will be statutory bodies subject to legislation. Therefore, its removal is not relevant in this situation.

Primary Care Trusts: Debts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health under what terms the debts of primary care trusts will be partially or wholly written off after the creation of GP commissioning consortia. [31901]

Mr Simon Burns: The strategic health authorities will be working with the primary care trusts (PCTs) in their region to ensure that through the planning process for 2011-12 and 2012-13 all existing legacy debt is dealt with.

General practitioner (GP) consortia will have their own budgets from 2013-14 and they will not be responsible for resolving PCT legacy debt that arose prior to 2011-12.

During 2011-12 and 2012-13, we expect developing GP consortia to work closely with PCTs to ensure that financial control and balance is maintained to prevent PCT deficits in those years.

Primary Care Trusts: Manpower

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the proportion of primary care trust staff who will be employed by GP commissioning consortia. [31900]

Mr Simon Burns: No estimate has been made of the proportion of primary care trust staff who will be employed by general practitioner (GP) commissioning consortia. GP commissioning consortia will have the opportunity to plan how they intend to carry out their future functions. In particular, they will be able to decide what activities they will undertake for themselves by employing or engaging their own staff, what activities they will carry out on a collaborative basis (e.g. through a lead consortium arrangement or through collaboration with local authorities), and what activities they wish to buy from external support organisations.

Queen Alexandra Hospital: Private Finance Initiative

Penny Mordaunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the total running costs for the Queen Alexandra hospital in Portsmouth was paid to the PFI provider in 2009-10; and what proportion of the total is projected to be paid to that provider in *(a)* 2010-11 and *(b)* each subsequent year for which projections have been made. [31420]

Mr Simon Burns: The information is not held in the format requested. Information is collected by trust, not by individual hospital. Queen Alexandra hospital is part of Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust, which comprises more than one site. The data provided in the following table relate to the proportion of total revenue expenditure by Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust in respect of its private finance initiative (PFI) scheme.

Data are not held centrally for 2010-11 or 2011-12.

Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust—proportion of total revenue expenditure relating to PFI scheme

	Percentage of total operating expenses relating to PFI
2009-10	8.2

Notes:

1. The figures provided represent the net operating expenses in respect of PFI schemes as a proportion of total operating expenses.

2. 2009-10 accounts were compiled under International Finance Reporting Standards, under which PFI costs in the audited summarisation schedules of trusts are split between capital repayments and revenue expenditure elements. An estimate of the PFI unitary payment for 2009-10 is held centrally by the Department as well as the audited outturn revenue expenditure figure for the Trust for this year. The percentage figure for this year is calculated using these two figures.

Source:

Audited Summarisation Schedules 2009-10

Surgery: Costs

Derek Twigg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS hospital trusts have *(a)* frozen and *(b)* postponed elective surgical procedures since 1 October 2010 on grounds of cost. [31805]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department does not collect information on how many national health service hospital trusts have frozen or postponed elective surgical procedures on grounds of cost.

Patients' rights to access services within maximum waiting times under the NHS constitution will continue and clinical priority remains the main determinant of when patients should be treated.

Commissioners should ensure that waiting times performance does not deteriorate and where possible improves.

Thromboembolism

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he has taken to ensure consistent assurance by strategic health authorities of acute provider CQUIN data returns, with regard to the requirement under the national goal to reduce avoidable death, disability and chronic ill health from venous thromboembolism for census data returns, rather than sample data returns. [31367]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department issued guidance on the national mandatory venous thromboembolism (VTE) risk assessment data collection in March 2010 and May 2010. This guidance included a specific expectation that medical directors of provider organisations take responsibility for local assurance of VTE risk assessment procedures and also the involvement of strategic health authority medical directors in respect of quality assurance of our national approach to VTE risk assessment data collection.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate he has made of the amount of money that has been paid in each strategic health authority area to acute providers through commissioners as part of the CQUIN national goal to reduce avoidable death, disability and chronic ill health from venous thromboembolism; [31368]

(2) whether any primary care trusts have withheld CQUIN payments to acute providers in any cases where the acute provider has met the requirements of the CQUIN national goal to reduce avoidable death, disability and chronic ill health from venous thromboembolism. [31370]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department does not hold information centrally on commissioning for quality and innovation (CQUIN) payments. This is solely for commissioners and providers to agree and manage through their local contractual relationship.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps have been taken to ensure that strategic health authorities have made primary care trust commissioners aware of the contractual obligations contained in the standard NHS contract for acute hospitals under which acute service providers must report to their lead commissioner through monthly audits of the percentage of patients receiving appropriate prophylaxis after risk assessment using the national tool, coupled with a report of root cause analysis of all confirmed cases of hospital-acquired venous thromboembolism. [31369]

Mr Simon Burns: The national health service standard contracts are used by primary care trusts (PCTs) when commissioning NHS funded care from all provider types. Strategic health authorities, as local system managers, are responsible for ensuring that PCTs have signed contracts with their providers in line with requirements set out in the Operating Framework. Where a provider fails to provide the information required by a PCT, commissioners can levy a financial withholding until the data are provided. The withholding is based on 1% of the total of the monthly contract value.

Tuberculosis

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of trends in the level of tuberculosis infection; and if he will make a statement. [31956]

Anne Milton: The Health Protection Agency published its annual report on tuberculosis surveillance in the United Kingdom on 4 November 2010. A copy has been placed in the Library.

This report supports the need for the Department's plans to take a radical new approach to public health, with more effective national and local systems for tackling key public health challenges, such as tuberculosis.

Welsh Language

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when his Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses such schemes can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31166]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department has not published a Welsh language scheme.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Addison Lee

Julie Elliott: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the public bodies for which it is responsible contracts services from Addison Lee private hire taxi company. [30704]

Mr Davey: Yes, the Department has recently contracted with Addison Lee using the DWP framework contract.

Information for the Department's non-departmental public bodies can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Adult Education: Newham

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people attended adult education courses in *(a)* the London borough of Newham and *(b)* London in (i) 2008 and (ii) 2009. [31590]

Mr Hayes: The following table shows the number of adults aged 19 or over participating in Government-funded further education in Newham local authority, London and England in 2007/08 and 2008/09.

This includes participation across further education, apprenticeships, Train to Gain, Adult Safeguarded Learning and University for Industry funding streams.

Further education adult (19+) participation by geography in 2007/08 and 2008/09

	2007/08	2008/09[1]
Newham local authority	24,800	28,800
London	513,300	564,800
England	3,304,400	3,771,200

[1] Figures for 2008/09 are not directly comparable to earlier years as the introduction of demand-led funding has changed how data are collected and how funded learners are defined from 2008/09 onwards. More information on demand led funding is available at: http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/datadictionary/businessdefinitions/Demand+Led+Funding.htm

Notes

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. Age is based on learner age at the start of the academic year.
3. Government office region and local authority are based upon the home postcode of the learner. The England figure includes learners whose postcode is outside of England or unknown.
4. Information in this table is based on all Government-funded learners.
5. These data include FE, apprenticeships/work based learning, Train to Gain, Adult Safeguarded Learning and University for Industry funding streams.

Source:

Individualised Learner Record

Consumer Focus: Redundancy Pay

Nia Griffith: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the redundancy costs arising from the closure of Consumer Focus in the next three years. [31980]

Mr Davey: We are working closely with Consumer Focus, Citizens Advice, and others on the proposed transfer of sectoral advocacy functions to Citizens Advice. The number and cost of any redundancies will depend on the number of staff required to participate in the proposed new model of consumer representation. We will consult in the spring of 2011 on our proposals, including options for implementation.

Demonstrations: Parliament Square

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which buildings occupied by his Department were damaged during the demonstration in Parliament Square on 9 December 2010; what estimate he has of the cost of repairs; and if he will make a statement. [31655]

Mr Davey: None of the buildings the Department occupies were damaged during the demonstration in Parliament Square on 9 December 2010.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to protect from damage the buildings leased by his Department from damage during demonstrations; and if he will make a statement. [31656]

Mr Davey: The Department is currently liaising with the police on what measures we should take to protect our buildings during demonstrations and looking at experience across Departments as well as normal security sources.

Departmental Billing

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many invoices his Department processed in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [30745]

Mr Davey: During the period 1 December 2009 to 30 November 2010 the Department processed 32,076 invoices.

Departmental Consultants

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much his Department has spent on *(a)* consultants and *(b)* temporary employees in each month since April 2010. [31469]

Mr Davey: The following table shows monthly spend by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills on consultants and temporary employees since April 2010. In producing these figures, we have used the Office for National Statistics (ONS) definition of "temporary/casual employees" which is:

> "those who have a fixed term contract of 12 months or less or are employed on a casual basis."

		£
2010	*Spend on consultants*	*Spend on temporary employees*
April	848,310	759,051
May	95,012	752,617
June	197,397	750,226
July	146,592	742,062
August	526,577	712,312
September	281,954	641,273
October	609,134	631,743
November	443,499	591,568

Departmental Contracts

Andrew Bingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of quality management statements in assisting with contract decisions by his Department; and what assessment he has made of the effects on the prospects for small businesses of winning contracts of such statements. [19020]

Mr Davey: The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills assesses quality management statements at pre-qualification and tender stages and uses these to evaluate both the ability of the company to deliver the project and any value for money implications. A wide range of suppliers including small businesses have proved themselves successful in satisfying the requirements of quality management statements.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working within his private office in each of the last five years. [28557]

Mr Davey: Overtime costs were as follows:

	£
2005-06[1]	33,030.23
2006-07[2]	48,001.09
2007-08[3]	38,784.67
2008-09[4]	33,254.27
2009-10[5]	75,859.57

[1] 2005-06: Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

[2] 2006-07: Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

[3] 2007-08: Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) until June 2007 and then Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR).

[4] 2008-09: Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR).

[5] 2009-10: Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) until June 2009 and then merged with Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) in June 2009 to form Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Therefore 2009-10 figure includes overtime costs for both Departments during the period April to June 2009.

Departmental Public Consultation

Dr Creasy: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many submissions his Department received to his call for evidence on consumer credit and personal insolvency; and how many such submissions *(a)* referenced the need for steps to address the cost of credit and *(b)* called for a cap on the amount that can be charged for credit. [31970]

Mr Davey: As of 15 December the call for evidence has received 184 substantive submissions. The call for evidence closed on 10 December but to ensure we obtain all the evidence to enable us to make the best decisions for consumers and business, my Department has agreed to accept late submissions and these are still being received.

We have received 43 responses to the questions on an interest rate cap for credit and store cards and 56 responses that referenced interest rate caps on high cost credit products have been received. 53 responses to the questions on OFT's review of high cost credit have also been received.

The call for evidence has so far received 1,740 individual e-mails that call for Government to introduce an interest rate cap on high cost credit products.

Most responses were received towards the end of the call for evidence and my officials are in the process of carrying out detailed analysis of all the responses received.

Departmental Vacancies

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many posts in his Department have been unfilled in each month since April 2010; and what the saving from the non-filling of such posts has been in that period. [31468]

Mr Davey: As part of the £6.2 billion savings announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in May, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills committed to making savings of £38 million (11% reduction in running cost budgets) in 2010-11.

The Department's systems do not currently monitor the number of posts that are unfilled in each month. As part of the £38 million savings, we have successfully concluded a voluntary exit scheme which has seen a 330 reduction on the core Department's headcount. The full year saving from this will be £16.4 million, with £8.2 million of these savings accruing in the current financial year.

Everything Everywhere

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment Ofcom has made of the effects of the formation of Everything Everywhere on the competitive position of the broadband market in the UK. [29177]

Mr Vaizey: The matter raised is the responsibility of the independent regulator, the Office of Communications (Ofcom), which is accountable to Parliament rather than Ministers. According to Ofcom, the competition issues relating to the merger between T-Mobile and Orange that resulted in the formation of Everything Everywhere were looked at by the European Commission, involving Ofcom in the process. This considered all potential impacts that the merger might have in the various affected markets.

A particular potential concern was the joint venture's holdings of spectrum and the potential impacts these would have on future competition in mobile broadband services. The Commission also focused on the impact that the merger would have on the network sharing agreement held between T-Mobile and Hutchison 3G. The Commission accepted undertakings to divest spectrum holdings in the 1.8 GHz band and the merging parties' commitment to maintain the network sharing agreement to enable competition in the future.

Furthermore, and separately from the merger, in terms of the future development of the mobile broadband market, the Secretary of State will direct Ofcom to do a competition assessment in connection with the release of spectrum in the 800 MHz and 2.6 GHz bands, and Ofcom is already working on such an assessment.

Export Credit Guarantees: Lancashire

Graham Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 594-5W, on export credit guarantees, with how many exporters in *(a)* Lancashire, *(b)* Haslingden and *(c)* Hyndburn the Export Credits Guarantee Department has engaged since 2005. [29148]

Mr Davey: Since 2005 the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) has engaged with a number of trade bodies and attended numerous trade fairs and exhibitions all around the country.

Recently, ECGD attended an exhibition and conference run by the Energy Industries Council (EIC), a national trade association, in Manchester where local companies as well as others were represented including the UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) local representatives. ECGD has also engaged with the International Trade Adviser representing UKTI in the north-west.

ECGD does not have comprehensive details of all the companies with which it made contact in this context and has no record of having specifically made contact with companies in Haslingden and Hyndburn, but does not rule this out.

Financial Services

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether his Department has assessed the merits of *(a)* applying a total cost of borrowing figure to high street bank overdraft fees and charges and *(b)* temporarily applying an annual percentage rate to high street bank overdrafts to enable consumers to compare the cost of such overdrafts to other short-term cash solutions. [31198]

Mr Davey: As part of the review of consumer credit and personal insolvency, BIS and HM Treasury issued a joint call for evidence in October. The call for evidence closed on 10 December. As part of this review evidence was collected on the impact of high bank charges. BIS and HMT are working through this evidence and will be coming forward with proposals in due course.

Foreign Trade: Israel

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the monetary value of *(a)* exports to and *(b)* imports from Israel was in each of the last 10 years. [31705]

Mr Prisk: The data requested are shown in the following table:

UK trade in goods and services with Israel 2000-2009 (£ million current prices)

	UK exports to Israel	*UK imports from Israel*
2000	1,961	1,291
2001	1,868	1,253
2002	1,857	1,082
2003	1,729	1,074
2004	1,793	1,153
2005	1,908	1,251
2006	1,762	1,260
2007	1,743	1,350
2008	1,874	1,465
2009	1,667	1,406

Source:
United Kingdom Balance of Payments, The Pink Book, ONS

Higher Education

Stephen Mosley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what proportion of students beginning undergraduate degree courses in English universities in *(a)* 1990, *(b)* 1995, *(c)* 2000, *(d)* 2005 and *(e)* 2007 completed their course and graduated. [31400]

Mr Willetts: Information on completion rates at English higher education institutions is shown in the table for the 1996/97, 2000/01, 2005/06 and 2007/08 academic years. Completion rate refers to the proportion of UK-domiciled full-time first degree starters who are projected to gain a first degree qualification. Figures for 1990 and 1995 are not available and the earliest available information on completion rates, for the 1996/97 academic year, is provided here as an alternative. More information on completion rates in higher education is available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency at the following link

http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/category/2/32/141/

Projected completion rates for full-time first degree starters[1] English higher education institutions: Academic years 1996/97, 2000/01, 2005/06 and 2007/08

Academic Year	*Completion rate (%)*
1996/97	76.8
2000/01	78.1
2005/06	78.0
2007/08	78.2

[1] Refers to UK-domiciled full-time first degree students of all ages starting a first degree who were projected to gain a first degree qualification: this completion rate is calculated by identifying a group of starting students known as a cohort, consisting of all students who started at UK higher education institutions on a full-time first degree course of study in a particular year. Their future progression outcomes whether they qualify, transfer to another institution, or do not continue are then projected, based on current progression patterns at higher education institutions.

Notes:

Percentages are given to one decimal place.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA): Performance Indicators in higher education in the UK

Higher Education: Admissions

Liz Kendall: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many pupils not eligible for free school meals took up a place at each university in *(a)* 2005-06, *(b)* 2006-7 and *(c)* 2007-8. [32098]

Mr Willetts: The information requested is shown in the table. These figures relate to pupils who were not in receipt of free school meals (FSM). The figures may include pupils who are eligible for FSM but do not claim. These figures have been estimated using matched data from the National Pupil Database and the Higher Education Statistics Agency Student Record. These rounded estimates allow for a small margin of error that arises as result of the matching procedure deployed.

Estimates of the number of non-FSM pupils aged 15 in English maintained schools who progress to HE by age 19, by higher education institution

UK Higher Education Institution	*2005/06*	*2006/07*	*2007/08*
The Open University	1,080	1,205	1,320
Bishop Grosseteste University College, Lincoln	190	200	230
Buckinghamshire New University	750	770	775
Central School of Speech and Drama	105	100	85
University of Chester	1,160	1,430	1,485
Canterbury Christ Church University	1,205	1,220	1,245
York St John University	790	915	960
University College Plymouth St Mark and St John	320	365	350
Dartington College of Arts	85	100	85
Edge Hill University	1,050	1,205	1,255
University College Falmouth	325	380	390
Harper Adams University College	180	260	250
Homerton College	10	0	0
Kent Institute of Art & Design	15	0	0
The University of Winchester	665	800	845
Liverpool Hope University	660	695	740
University of the Arts, London	885	950	1,190
University of Bedfordshire	465	745	830
The University of Northampton	1,065	1,150	1,025
Newman College of Higher Education	200	255	300
Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication	195	190	180
Roehampton University	900	1,165	1,005
Rose Bruford College	110	110	120
Royal Academy of Music	15	15	25
Royal College of Music	15	25	20
Royal Northern College of Music	55	60	60
Southampton Solent University	1,420	1,510	1,490
St Martin's College	710	755	955
St Mary's University College, Twickenham	475	550	560
Leeds Trinity and All Saints	475	480	470
Trinity Laban	80	80	75
Surrey Institute of Art & Design	15	0	0
The University of Worcester	610	590	670
Anglia Ruskin University	1,495	1,280	1,425
Bath Spa University	670	755	815
The University of Bolton	325	420	445
Bournemouth University	1,670	1,900	2,020
The University of Brighton	1,635	1,925	1,920
Birmingham City University	1,770	1,810	1,830
The University of Central Lancashire	2,635	2,835	2,785
University of Gloucestershire	975	1,035	1,090
Coventry University	1,665	1,825	1,810
University of Derby	1,270	1,435	1,375
The University of East London	540	610	710
The University of Greenwich	1,135	1,185	1,375
University of Hertfordshire	2,705	2,675	2,405
The University of Huddersfield	1,735	2,075	2,040
The University of Lincoln	1,795	1,900	1,840
Kingston University	1,895	2,235	2,240
Leeds Metropolitan University	2,830	3,090	3,570
Liverpool John Moores University	2,315	2,500	2,560
The Manchester Metropolitan University	3,705	4,035	4,125
Middlesex University	1,160	1,355	1,370
De Montfort University	2,790	2,615	2,400
The University of Northumbria at Newcastle	2,265	2,585	2,720
The Nottingham Trent University	2,980	2,795	2,825
Oxford Brookes University	1,180	1,260	1,160
The University of Plymouth	2,620	2,910	2,800

Estimates of the number of non-FSM pupils aged 15 in English maintained schools who progress to HE by age 19, by higher education institution

UK Higher Education Institution	*2005/06*	*2006/07*	*2007/08*
The University of Portsmouth	2,320	2,350	2,710
Sheffield Hallam University	3,360	3,370	3,720
London South Bank University	545	635	670
Staffordshire University	885	1,065	1,585
The University of Sunderland	1,240	1,245	1,315
The University of Teesside	1,355	1,500	1,555
Thames Valley University	530	595	495
University of the West of England, Bristol	2,290	2,740	2,785
The University of Chichester	545	580	605
The University of Westminster	1,315	1,415	1,400
Wimbeldon School of Art	65	5	0
The University of Wolverhampton	1,965	2,035	1,955
The University of Wales, Newport	200	225	205
The North-East Wales Institute of Higher Education	125	145	115
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff	500	505	545
University of Glamorgan	340	370	425
Swansea Institute of Higher Education	155	195	145
Trinity College, Carmarthen	50	45	30
University of Abertay Dundee	30	20	20
Edinburgh College of Art	40	40	50
Glasgow School of Art	35	70	55
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	45	65	40
The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama	10	10	20
The Robert Gordon University	15	25	20
The University of Paisley	15	20	15
Glasgow Caledonian University	40	35	30
Napier University	50	60	50
Aston University	975	1,090	1,090
The University of Bath	1,055	995	1,120
The University of Birmingham	2,715	2,570	2,770
The University of Bradford	775	870	885
The University of Bristol	1,350	1,370	1,535
Brunel University	1,455	1,380	1,605
The University of Cambridge	1,310	1,280	1,320
The City University	640	745	770
University of Durham	1,690	1,655	1,575
The University of East Anglia	1,420	1,725	1,670
The University of Essex	1,110	1,260	1,195
The University of Exeter	1,390	1,320	1,610
The University of Hull	1,895	1,850	1,975
The University of Keele	1,245	1,345	1,135
The University of Kent	1,840	2,055	2,135
The University of Lancaster	1,700	1,675	1,680
The University of Leeds	3,825	3,525	3,680
The University of Leicester	1,250	1,325	1,385
The University of Liverpool	2,185	2,145	2,240
Birkbeck College	25	25	45
Goldsmiths College	460	430	540
Imperial College of Science, Technology & Medicine	540	605	625
Institute of Education	0		
King's College London	1,090	1,140	1,220
London School of Economics and Political Science	330	280	305
Queen Mary and Westfield College	945	1,100	1,385
Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	785	770	880
The Royal Veterinary College	165	160	180
St George's Hospital Medical School	100	150	180
The School of Oriental and African Studies	150	180	195
The School of Pharmacy	70	60	75
University College London	1,010	970	1,060
University of London (Institutes and activities)	20		0
Loughborough University	1,935	2,010	2,020
The University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	1,910	1,925	2,070
The University of Nottingham	2,555	2,515	2,895
The University of Oxford	1,215	1,175	1,255
The University of Reading	1,415	1,470	1,750
The University of Salford	1,780	1,745	1,730
The University of Sheffield	3,050	2,965	2,890
The University of Southampton	1,920	2,225	2,435
The University of Surrey	870	965	1,035
The University of Sussex	940	1,190	1,295
The University of Warwick	1,485	1,415	1,555
The University of York	1,290	1,265	1,415
The University of Edinburgh	605	610	585
The University of Glasgow	300	230	275
The University of Strathclyde	50	55	45
The University of Aberdeen	175	205	170
Heriot-Watt University	105	90	90
The University of Dundee	100	100	105
The University of St Andrews	300	240	250
The University of Stirling	125	150	130
Scottish Agricultural College	5	5	
The University of Wales, Lampeter	80	105	75
Aberystwyth University	995	1,025	780
Bangor University	730	745	620
Cardiff University	1,740	1,595	1,765
Swansea University	800	780	820
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama	55	45	0
The Queen's University of Belfast	50	45	55
University of Ulster	25	35	25
Writtle College	145	140	135
Norwich School of Art and Design	150	190	245
Cumbria Institute of the Arts	180	165	15

Estimates of the number of non-FSM pupils aged 15 in English maintained schools who progress to HE by age 19, by higher education institution

UK Higher Education Institution	*2005/06*	*2006/07*	*2007/08*
Stranmills University College	—	0	—
St. Mary's University College	0	—	—
Royal Agricultural College	45	40	35
UHI Millennium Institute	15	15	25
The Arts Institute at Bournemouth	300	275	375
Bell College	5	—	—
Conservatoire for Dance and Drama	85	110	95
Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies	365	395	380
Courtauld Institute of Art	10	20	15
London Metropolitan University	890	925	895
The University of Buckingham	10	10	25
The University of Manchester	3,350	3,395	3,485
Heythrop College	0	70	55
The University College for the Creative Arts	835	850	885
Leeds College of Music	50	25	40
Guildhall School of Music and Drama	0	50	35
Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts	0	95	95
University Campus Suffolk	0	0	175
Overall total non-FSM pupils	148,670	156,445	162,445

Notes:

1. All figures are estimates and have been rounded to the nearest five; figures less than 5 are shown as '—', zero counts are shown as '0'.
2. Pupils' eligibility for free school meals is based on those recorded as such on Pupil Level Census. As this is a snapshot of pupils in one year, this may include pupils who claimed free school meals in previous years.

Source:

Matched data from the National Pupil Database, the Higher Education Statistics Agency Student Record and the Learning and Skills Council Individualised Learner Record.

Higher Education: Birmingham

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people resident in Birmingham Ladywood constituency *(a)* applied to attend university in the academic year 2010/11 and *(b)* were successful in their applications; and what proportion of each were from disadvantaged backgrounds. [31395]

Mr Willetts: The information is in the following table and is provided by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and therefore mostly covers full-time undergraduate study.

Applicants who were not accepted for entry can include: individuals who did not receive any offer; individuals who received an offer (conditional or unconditional) but decided not to go to university; individuals who received a conditional offer and fail to meet the specific conditions (e.g. they do not achieve certain grades); and individuals who decided to withdraw from the UCAS system.

Applicants and accepted applicants from Birmingham Ladywood constituency to full-time undergraduate courses in UK institutions via UCAS by area background. 2010/11.

Area background	*Applicants*	*% of total*	*Accepted applicants*	*% of total*
Disadvantaged[1]	1,141	70	737	69
Other	497	30	336	31
Grand Total	1,638	100	1,073	100

[1] For the purposes of their funding allocations, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) treat entrants from the most disadvantaged 40% of neighbourhoods as "disadvantaged"
http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/fund/
HEFCE uses two different groupings of areas to define disadvantage which are based on the historic levels of participation or qualification in higher education by the local population: one based on the participation rates of young (19 and under) people in HE (which is used by HEFCE when looking at young full-time entrants); and one based on the proportion of adults in the area who hold HE qualifications (which is used by HEFCE when looking at part-time and mature full-time entrants). Because this table includes applicants and accepted applicants of all ages disadvantage is defined by the HE qualified adults measure.

Source:

UCAS provisional end of year data (represents applicants and accepted applicants at October 13 2010; end of year data will be available from 20th January 2011).

Higher Education: Disability

Mr Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the proportion of students at higher education institutions who *(a)* have a physical disability and *(b)* use a wheelchair. [31802]

Mr Willetts: The latest available information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency is shown in the following table. Figures for the 2009/10 academic year will be available in January 2011.

Enrolments[1] by Disability UK Higher Education Institutions academic year 2008/09

Disability	*Percentage of known*
No known disability	92.0
Blind/partially sighted	0.2
Deaf/hearing impairment	0.3
Wheelchair user/mobility difficulties	0.3
Personal care support	0.0
Mental health difficulties	0.5
An unseen disability, e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma	1.2
Multiple disabilities	0.7
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	0.1
A specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia	3.8
A disability not listed above	0.9
Total known	100.0

[1] Covers enrolments of all domiciles on all levels and modes of study.

Note:

Figures are based on a HESA standard registration population and have been rounded to the nearest five.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Higher Education: Finance

Mr McFadden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much he plans to allocate to each of the access and participation funds for higher education set out in footnote 62 on page 60 of the Browne Review of higher education funding. [31744]

Mr Willetts: The annual grant letter to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) was issued on 20 December. It sets out the council's budget for 2011-12 and our priorities for the use of that funding. We restate in the letter our commitment to the continuance of funding to encourage widening access and participation. However, it is for the council to determine the level of funding to particular streams such as these. The Government's response to Lord Browne's recommendations on an access and success fund will be set out in the Higher Education White Paper.

Mrs Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has made an assessment of the effects of his proposals to reduce the teaching grant on *(a)* the University of Liverpool, *(b)* Liverpool John Moores University and *(c)* Liverpool Hope University. [31906]

Mr Willetts: Our proposals for reform are a package which involves university funding flowing via the informed choices of students rather than through teaching grant. It will be for each individual institution to respond to the opportunities given by the new arrangements. We see no reason why the institutions in Liverpool should not thrive in the new environment given their existing reputations.

Mr Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether his Department holds information on the funds held in reserve by universities in the Russell Group. [32001]

Mr Willetts: This information is not held by the Department. There is information about the financial health of the higher education sector in Universities UK's annual survey "Patterns of Higher Education in the UK: 10th Report", published in

September 2010. A copy will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Innovation: Greater London

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what *(a)* crtieria and *(b)* time scale he has set for assessing the effects of the proposed East End of London HighTech Hub in terms of (i) jobs created, (ii) level of exports and (iii) other factors. [29175]

Mr Prisk: So far as I am aware, no such criteria or time scale have yet been set.

Institute for Fiscal Studies

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the answer of 18 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 644W, on the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), which contracts his Department had with the IFS between 2005-06 and 2010-11; what the monetary value was of each such contract; and what tender process was undertaken in each case. [28823]

Mr Davey: Between 2005-06 and 2010-11 the Department, and its predecessors, had the following contracts with the Institute for Fiscal Studies:

Contract purpose	*Procurement method*	*Value £*
To calculate the value of school teachers' pensions	Framework agreement	26,905
Analysis of firm structures and outsourcing in the UK	Competitive tender	21,044
Analysis of patterns of business locations in the UK	Competitive tender	23,106
New matched data reporting on the employment and earnings outcomes of training	Competitive tender	105,221
Analysing Business-University Innovation linkages	Competitive tender	8,820
Research on taxes, benefits and the national minimum wage	Competitive tender	20,875
Investigating the impact of the national minimum wage on the labour market behaviour of young workers	Competitive tender	20,450
Research contract initiated by former DCSF on behalf of former DIUS (no further details available and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost)	Competitive tender	11,698
Various training courses between 2005/6 and 2010/11	Single tender	13,381
Purchase of three publications	Single tender	105
Membership fee	n/a	35
Total		[1]251,640

[1] All figures are inclusive of VAT

Note:

The original contract values were, in some cases, slightly higher than the final amounts paid

Lloyds TSB: Halifax Bank of Scotland

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the answer of 18 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 1049, on Lloyds Banking Group shareholders, whether the terms of reference of the Independent Commission on Banking include consideration of the position of shareholders of Lloyds Banking Group; and if he will make a statement. [31352]

Mr Prisk: The terms of reference of the Independent Commission on Banking were published at the time of its creation on 16 June 2010. The terms of reference are available to view on the Commission's website. The Commission is independent and will report to the Cabinet Committee on Banking.

Local Enterprise Partnership Projects

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps he plans to take to facilitate and support shared local enterprise partnership projects between regions. [31627]

Mr Prisk: In the White Paper on Local Growth we encourage co-operation between partnerships where this would result in a more efficient use of resources and secure a better outcome than operating in isolation. This co-operation need not be restricted to neighbouring partnerships and will be particularly important where partnerships share a common interest. We will not be prescriptive how this co-operation is achieved: local enterprise partnerships are not Government bodies and are being developed from the bottom up.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the likely number of approved local enterprise partnerships that will be in place by April 2011. [31637]

Mr Prisk: To date 27 local enterprise partnerships have met the Government's expectations and have been asked to put their governance arrangements in place. Other partnerships continue to develop their proposals so they can be in a similar position. We will continue to engage with prospective partnerships at a speed that is appropriate for them.

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what mechanisms are in place to monitor the implementation of local enterprise partnerships; [31638]

(2) what mechanism is in place to monitor the implementation of local enterprise partnerships. [31629]

Mr Prisk: The Government are committed to working with each new local enterprise partnership to enable them to establish their roles and functions. Partnerships will differ across the country in both form and functions in order to best meet local circumstances and opportunities. As such there will be no one process for this engagement.

Local Enterprise Partnerships: Tyne and Wear

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 799W, on the Newcastle Gateshead local enterprise partnership, what he considers to be an appropriate economic geography for the coverage of a local enterprise partnership. [32239]

Mr Prisk: As set out in the White Paper on Local Growth, the Government's consideration regarding economic geography is whether the geography proposed represents a reasonable natural economic geography and whether the geography is supported by business and is sufficiently strategic.

Manufacturing Industries

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what plans his Department has to increase the level of remanufacturing as part of the UK's low carbon economy agenda. [30709]

Mr Prisk: Remanufacturing is an important feature of the move to a low carbon economy. Any process which reduces costs, waste and carbon emissions, while meeting demand and serving the economy, is to be welcomed.

This Department, working with the Department of Energy and Climate Change, is carrying out a review of energy intensive sectors, such as iron and steel and aluminium, which will consider how remanufacturing—and recycling—will play a role in ensuring the future competitiveness of these sectors in the low carbon economy. It is without doubt that there will be a growing global demand for these goods over the course of this century, so the challenge for Governments is to find a way to meet this demand whilst also ensuring carbon emissions are reduced to acceptable levels.

Mortgage Express and Bradford and Bingley: Complaints

Mr Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many complaints his Department received on *(a)* Mortgage Express and *(b)* Bradford and Bingley in the latest period in which figures are available. [31990]

Mr Davey: None. Regulating the financial services sector is a matter for HM Treasury.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills with reference to the recommendations of the First Report from the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee, Session 2010-11, HC 434, on the new local enterprise partnerships: an initial assessment, if he will put in place mechanisms to ensure that assets owned by the regional development agencies which are not of national strategic importance are not sold to developers unless they can demonstrate that their proposed use of the relevant asset will benefit the local economy. [31520]

Mr Prisk: Any sale of regional development agency assets will be in accordance with the principles outlined in the Local Growth White Paper (CM7961) paragraphs 2.45-2.47. These include as a primary consideration the aim to achieve the best possible outcome for the region consistent with achieving value for the public purse.

Ofcom: Opinion Leader Research

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what estimate he has made of the cost to his Department to date of work by Opinion Leader as part of Ofcom's review of relay services. [31555]

Mr Vaizey: The Opinion Leader research is funded by Ofcom. There is no direct cost to either the Department for Business or the Department for Culture for this work.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what consultation with groups representing deaf and hearing-impaired people was undertaken by Opinion Leader as part of Ofcom's review of relay services. [31557]

Mr Vaizey: Ofcom commissioned Opinion Leader to conduct research among UK adults (aged 16+) who either currently use, or may have a need for, access to relay services. They conducted qualitative research with 94 individuals and 323 people took part in quantitative research. During the design of the research Opinion Leader took some informal advice from organisations with some experience of conducting research with similar groups of individuals.

One North East

Mr Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what the principal *(a)* assets and *(b)* liabilities are of One North East; what plans he has for the future of those residual assets and liabilities; and if he will make a statement. [28168]

Mr Prisk: The principal assets and liabilities of One North East are set out in its report and accounts for 2009-10 (HC125). These will be handled in the accordance with the principles outlined in the Local Growth White Paper (CM7961) paragraphs 2.45-2.47.

Overseas Trade: Commonwealth

Mr David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps he plans to promote trade and investment opportunities between the UK and other Commonwealth countries. [31547]

Mr Prisk: UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) is the Government's lead trade and investment promotion organisation and is present in 96 markets around the world. Working with other Departments, UKTI's strategy is to focus its resources in the markets where there is greatest demand from business for UKTI services, reflecting actual and potential opportunities in these markets.

UKTI recognises that many Commonwealth countries represent key markets for the UK and its teams are working to encourage more UK companies to do business in and with them. Dealings with Commonwealth countries reflect the diversity of UKTI's overseas market coverage, including:

The development of business opportunities in high growth markets such as Singapore and India. The Prime Minister, for example, led a major visit to India, including a business delegation, earlier this year.

Maintaining and developing business links with the UK's major developed markets, such as Canada and Australia.

Maximising the benefits from British cultural links in developing opportunities in the Caribbean and Africa.

UKTI also works where appropriate with Commonwealth institutions, particularly the Commonwealth Business Council, on maximising the business benefit from high profile events where these are in line with UKTI's strategic priorities. Examples of such activities include the Commonwealth games; the business elements of visits to the UK by Commonwealth Heads of State from high growth markets; and business events in the margins of Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings (e.g. in November 2009, UKTI's team in Trinidad and Tobago hosted the Commonwealth Business Forum-UKTI Business Breakfast, in the margins of the CHG meeting).

Regional Development Agencies

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what his Department's budget is for regional development agencies in 2010-11; [30625]

(2) by what date he expects all of the operations of regional development agencies have been wound up; [30627]

(3) what budget has been allocated to each regional development agency for each year until its operations are wound up. [30629]

Mr Prisk: In 2010-11 the regional development agencies' (RDA) single budget is £1.4 billion, net of receipts, of which £434 million is provided by this Department.

Indicative allocations for 2011-12 from the single budget have been provided to the RDAs as follows:

	£ million
Advantage West Midlands	97.5
East of England Development Agency	24.4
East Midlands Development Agency	41.7
North West Development Agency	108.3
One North East	61.0
South East England Development Agency	37.5
South West of England Regional Development Agency	42.6
Yorkshire Forward	102.6

Note:
These figures exclude notional budgets to cover non-cash costs such as depreciation.

An indicative allocation for the London Development Agency will be communicated to it in due course. Final allocations to all RDAs are expected to be issued in March 2011. Additional funds are being held centrally to cover transition and closure costs.

Subject to the passage of the Public Bodies Bill, the regional development agencies outside London are expected to close by 31 March 2012. No allocations are being made to them after that date. It is expected that legal commitments remaining at the time of closure will transfer to successor bodies and that resources to enable project completion will be provided from the spending review settlement.

Regional Development Agencies: Finance

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what mechanism is in place for the transfer of EU funding from regional development agencies to local enterprise partnerships. [31628]

Mr Prisk: Regional development agencies (RDAs) will continue to manage the European regional development funds (ERDF) until new arrangements are in place. New arrangements will be announced next March. The programmes remain open with projects continuing to be appraised and approved. Going forward, we expect that local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) will be beneficiaries of EU funds.

Delivery of funding through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) will transfer from RDAs to DEFRA. DEFRA will engage with LEPs with a rural interest on future arrangements for the programme.

RDAs do not have delivery responsibilities for other EU funds.

Regional Development Agencies

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will publish a transition plan for each regional development agency. [31486]

Mr Prisk: The transition plans, which are still being developed, are owned by individual regional development agencies (RDA). RDAs have significant assets and liabilities, and the plans for their disposal will be commercially sensitive. The plans will also contain details of how staffing numbers are proposed to be reduced in the run-up to closure, anticipated in March 2012. I do not therefore believe publication will be possible though the RDAs will continue to adhere to the normal transparency requirements.

Regional Growth Fund

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what mechanism will be used to target the Regional Growth Fund on areas worst hit by the recession. [31207]

Mr Prisk: The Regional Growth Fund is a challenge fund that is open to bids from the private sector, or public private partnership from any part of England. Bids will be expected to demonstrate how they meet the fund's two published objectives:

stimulate enterprise by providing support for projects and programmes with significant potential for economic growth and create additional sustainable private sector employment; and

support in particular those areas and communities that are currently dependent on the public sector make the transition to sustainable private sector-led growth and prosperity.

To help applicants, BIS has produced guidance that details the criteria that bids will be assessed against to meet the two objectives.

BIS has also published an outline of the fund's appraisal process, part of which includes an assessment by an independent advisory panel chaired by my noble Friend Lord Heseltine. All of these are available on the Regional Growth Fund web page:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/regional-economic-development/regional-growth-fund

At all stages in the appraisal and approval process, the only criteria applications will be judged against are those that are published. A ministerial decision-making panel will consider bids recommended by the advisory panel, and will take into account in its decision the extent to which different areas are reliant on public sector employment by looking at a range of evidence, including official statistics, evidence supplied in bids and the work of the DWP labour market group.

Royal Mail

Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on what dates *(a)* he, *(b)* other Ministers in his Department and *(c)* departmental officials have met representatives of Royal Mail Group on the future of Royal Mail since 1 October 2010. [31766]

Mr Davey: BIS Ministers have held several meetings with representatives of Royal Mail to discuss the future of the company since the 1 October 2010. The meetings I have had are as follows:

7 October with Moya Greene;

2 November with Moya Greene;

29 November with Donald Brydon and Moya Greene;

9 December with Donald Brydon and Moya Greene.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State had one meeting as follows:

8 December with Moya Greene.

Departmental officials meet with representatives of Royal Mail on a regular basis.

Royal Mail: Privatisation

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent estimate his Department has made of the cost to the public purse of the mechanisms necessary to facilitate the privatisation of Royal Mail. [3205

Mr Davey: A decision on the form of process for a future disposal of Royal Mail shares has yet to be made so there is no overall estimate for the costs involved.

The Government believe that it is entirely appropriate to take expert commercial advice on a major transaction to ensure that the taxpayer receives value for money. We fully expect the overall costs to be consistent with or lower than the usual for a similar transaction.

Science: Research

Esther McVey: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps his Department is taking to assist science and technology research institutions in contributing to economic growth. [3149

Mr Willetts: HEFCE and the Research Councils will work together so that rewards and incentives to bring universities and business closer together are delivered coherently:

Research Councils encourage researchers to consider potential beneficiaries and the future impact of their research from inception.

HEFCE and Research Councils support current collaborations between research and business and reward high performance.

The Research Excellence Framework will recognise the impact of excellent research undertaken in universities in the past.

Full details of funding for these initiatives for 2011-15 can be found in the document "The Allocation of Science and Research Funding" published on the BIS website today.

Esther McVey: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education on the future of science research and expertise in England. [31491]

Mr Willetts: Both my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I have regular discussions with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and the Minister of State for Schools. The importance of science education in schools and universities has been discussed by us in the context of the National Curriculum Review and the Schools White Paper.

Sheffield Forgemasters: Finance

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 689-90W, on nuclear power stations: construction, what assessment he has made of the effects on *(a)* the supply chain and *(b)* the economy of the decision not to proceed with a loan to Sheffield Forgemasters; and if he will re-open discussions with Sheffield Forgemasters with the aim of enabling them to finance the purchase of a 15,000 tonne press for use in the supply chain for new nuclear facilities. [32247]

Mr Prisk: No direct assessment was made on the effects of the supply chain but we are aware of the interest from parts of the industry regarding the withdrawal of this conditional loan.

As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business stated in his written ministerial statement to the House on the 27 July this year, *Official Report, column 79WS*:

> "The Government's decision to cancel the £80 million loan for a new 15,000 tonne press that had been conditionally offered to Sheffield Forgemasters by the last Government was taken on the grounds of affordability. Sheffield Forgemasters is a great British company with a dedicated, highly-skilled work force and a strong senior management team. The Government's decision is no reflection on the company's staff, directors or this particular project".

He also made clear in his evidence to the Committee that Sheffield Forgemasters would be welcome to put in an application for support under the Regional Growth Fund.

Students: Fees and Charges

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has carried out an equality impact assessment of the likely effects of changes to the level of tuition fees on students from a low socio-economic background. [31685]

Mr Willetts: The Department has published an interim equality impact assessment which considered the likely effects of the proposed HE funding and student finance reform package on students from a low socio-economic background.

The interim equality impact assessment is available at:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/higher-education/docs/i/10-1310-interim-equality-impact-assessment-he-funding-and-student-finance.pdf

Students: Loans

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many loan applications the Student Loans Company has not yet processed; how many such applications were received prior to 31 July 2010; and if he will make a statement. [30466]

Mr Willetts: By 14 October 2010, the latest date for which official figures are available, the Student Loans Company (SLC) had received a total of 715,000 applications for financial support from new and continuing students in England for the academic year 2010/11. Of these, 26,000 applications had been cancelled or deemed ineligible and 606,000 had been prepared for payment. In 72,000 cases the SLC was awaiting further evidence or a signed loan acceptance form from the applicant in order to progress the application. 11,000 applications had not yet been processed and were with the SLC for assessment.

Of the 83,000 live applications not yet prepared for payment at 14 October, 41,000 were received before 31 July 2010. Data are not immediately available to show how many of those applications were awaiting further information from the applicant and how many were with the SLC for assessment. The SLC publicised the deadlines for applications for student financial support, the last of which was at the end of June 2010, through radio and press campaigns, as well as through the NUS, UCAS and online. By the start of term, SLC had paid 99.3% of all eligible applications received before the relevant deadlines with the right documentation.

Universities: Applications

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many people resident in Birmingham, Erdington constituency *(a)* applied to attend university in the academic year 2010-11 and *(b)* were successful in their applications; and what proportion of each were from disadvantaged backgrounds. [31626]

Mr Willetts: The information is in the following table and is provided by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and therefore mostly covers full-time undergraduate study.

Applicants who were not accepted for entry can include: individuals who did not receive any offer; individuals who received an offer (conditional or unconditional) but decided not to go to university; individuals who received a conditional offer and failed to meet the specific conditions (e.g. they did not achieve certain grades); and individuals who decided to withdraw from the UCAS system.

Applicants and accepted applicants from Birmingham, Erdington constituency to full-time undergraduate courses in UK institutions via UCAS by area background, 2010/11

Area background	*Applicants*	*Percentage of total*	*Accepted applicants*	*Percentage of total*
Disadvantaged[1]	614	71	402	71
Other	249	29	167	29
Grand total	863	100	569	100

[1] For the purposes of their funding allocations, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) treat entrants from the most disadvantaged 40 of neighbourhoods as "disadvantaged", available at:
http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/fund/
HEFCE uses two different groupings of areas to define disadvantage which are based on the historic levels of participation or qualification in higher education by the local population: one based on the participation rates of young (19 and under) people in HE (which is used by HEFCE when looking at young full-time entrants); and one based on the proportion of adults in the area who hold HE qualifications (which is used by HEFCE when looking at part-time and mature full-time entrants). Because this table includes applicants and accepted applicants of all ages, disadvantage is defined by the HE qualified adults measure.
Source:
UCAS provisional end of year data (represents applicants and accepted applicants at 13 October 2010; end of year data will be available from 20 January 2011).

Welsh Language

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills when his Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses such schemes can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31158]

Mr Davey: The BIS Welsh language scheme was last published in May 2009. The web address for both the Welsh and English versions is:

http://www.bis.gov.uk/site/welsh

Working Time Directive

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what provisions are in place to ensure observance by employers of the requirements of the Working Time Directive. [31613]

Mr Davey: Enforcement of entitlements under the Working Time Regulations is split between different authorities. For example, the working time limits and health assessment requirements (for night workers) are enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in industrial premises, schools and hospitals. The entitlements to rest and leave are enforced through employment tribunals.

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what requirements there are on employers to maintain a register of employees who opt out of the provisions of the Working Time Directive. [31614]

Mr Davey: Regulation 4(2) of the Working Time Regulations requires an employer to keep up-to-date records of all workers who have signed an opt-out agreement to work beyond the 48 hour average weekly limit.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC: Trade Unions

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what assessment he has made of the voting patterns of BBC employees; and if he will make a statement. [31930]

Mr Vaizey: The Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport has undertaken no assessment.

Churches: Repairs and Maintenance

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport in respect of how many eligible places of worship grants have been made under the listed places of worship grant scheme in the latest period for which figures are available; and what the average amount of each grant was in the latest period for which figures are available. [32102]

John Penrose: The listed places of worship grant scheme makes payments equivalent to the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings primarily in use for public worship. In the 2009-10 financial year, 3,745 claims were paid UK-wide, with a total value of £14,963,412.67, giving an average grant of £3,996.

Cultural Institutions: Finance

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what mechanism the Government plan to put in place to enable cultural institutions to generate more funding from private sources. [31526]

Mr Vaizey: We have announced a 10-point action plan to boost philanthropy in the cultural sector. The action plan comprises:

1. An £80 million match funding scheme, with the potential to raise more than £160 million through a series of grants. This will provide a range of support for smaller organisations, those outside London, and larger bodies, including those who want to develop endowments.
2. The Government reviewing what they can do to encourage philanthropy, reporting back in the spring.
3. More visible public recognition for philanthropy, thanking donors, demonstrating the value of philanthropy and encouraging others to give.
4. Developing fundraising skills and capacity across the culture sector—to increase and share skills and capacity, promote best practice, professionalise fundraising and develop a culture of 'asking' as well as 'giving'.
5. Promoting and increasing planned giving, including legacy giving.
6. Supporting the long-term development of endowments.
7. Harnessing digital technology to boost philanthropy.
8. Increasing giving from international donors.
9. Encouraging more investment by the business sector.
10. Strengthening links between culture and other sectors which are supported through philanthropy.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31230]

John Penrose: No staff employed by the Department have been paid at a rate which is equivalent or below the London living wage in the last financial year.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31173]

John Penrose: The departmental spending review settlements are set on a tax-inclusive basis, including the increase to the standard rate of VAT. Budget managers within the Department are aware of the upcoming change and this has been factored into their budget planning.

Freeview Service

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what proportion of the UK's *(a)* territory and *(b)* population do not receive the full range of public service channels available via Freeview digital terrestrial services; and if he will make a statement. [31093]

Mr Vaizey: After switchover 98.5% of households will be able to receive around 15 Freeview channels including all the public service broadcasting channels. In addition about 90% of households who get their signal from a main transmitter will receive services from all six multiplexes.

Horniman Museum

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport which alternative bodies are being considered as potential sponsors for the Horniman Museum and Gardens for the period after 2014-15; when he expects the process of identifying sponsors to be concluded; and what arrangements will be put in place should no such sponsor be identified. [31854]

Mr Vaizey: The Department has considered a number of potential sponsors and will make a statement once a new sponsor has been confirmed. The Department hopes to conclude this process by April 2011. In the unlikely event that no new sponsorship arrangements can be found for the Horniman Museum, the Department will consider the needs of the museum along with its other sponsored bodies in the next spending review period.

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what plans he has for the future of the museum accreditation scheme following the abolition of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. [31551]

Mr Vaizey: On 9 December Arts Council England announced that it was to take over a number of the functions relating to museums and libraries, including the museum accreditation scheme, following the abolition of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

Museums: Closures

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how many public sector museums in *(a)* the west midlands and *(b)* England closed in each year since 2003. [31811]

Mr Vaizey: Since the start of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council Renaissance programme in 2002, none of the regional hub museum services has closed. Information on closures of independent, local authority or charitably funded museums is not held centrally.

Museums: Finance

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what resources his Department made available to Arts Council England for museums development work in the last 12 months; what the scope of that work was; and whether its was additional to grants awarded under the Renaissance programme. [31552]

Mr Vaizey: This Department made no resources available to Arts Council England for museums development work in the last 12 months.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what funding his Department expects to make available under the Renaissance programme to hub museums in 2011-12; by what mechanism such funding will be distributed; and when he expects to announce his decision on the selection of hub museums from 2012-13. [31554]

Mr Vaizey: The Renaissance programme has been allocated £45.6 million in 2011-12 and responsibility for the programme will transfer to Arts Council England (ACE) during 2011-12. We have asked ACE and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council to work together on detailed plans for the future of the Renaissance programme and we expect an announcement in due course.

Olympic Games 2012: Football

Thomas Docherty: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport pursuant to the oral answer from the Prime Minister to the right hon. Member for Tottenham of 15 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 905, what his policy is on the principle of a professional football club using the Olympic Stadium in London after 2012. [31848]

Hugh Robertson: Our main priority is to ensure a long-term, sustainable legacy for the Olympic Stadium. The Olympic Park Legacy Company is leading on determining the legacy use of the stadium and is currently negotiating with the two short-listed consortiums bidding to use the stadium after the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Olympic Games 2012: Human Trafficking

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what organisations he has consulted to assist him to assess the risks of people trafficking associated with the London 2012 Olympics; and whether he plans to take specific steps to reduce that risk. [30812][1]

Hugh Robertson: Regular threat briefings take place between the Secretary of State, the Minister for Sport and the Olympics and the Olympic Intelligence Centre, a dedicated body within the Metropolitan Police that gathers information from the security services and regional police forces about potential threats to the games. As part of this the Department has been informed that we are not currently seeing any evidence of an increase in human trafficking related to the London 2012 games.

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[1] *[Official Report, 11 January 2011, Vol. 521, c. 3-4MC.]*

However, we remain vigilant and will be continuously reviewing the threat of human trafficking. The Government are determined to deter traffickers from exploiting London 2012 and we are building on the considerable expertise the UK has in tackling this issue. Should the intelligence indicate an increase in trafficking we shall ensure that the appropriate measures are in place.

Public Libraries: Finance

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what plans he has for the Future Libraries programme and its current partnerships with *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Local Government Association to support the development of local government cultural services following the abolition of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. [31553]

Mr Vaizey: On 9 December 2010 Arts Council England announced that it was to take over a number of the functions relating to museums and libraries following the abolition of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. This will include aspects of the Future Libraries programme and other support for local government cultural services.

Taekwondo

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what role *(a)* Sport England and *(b)* the British Taekwondo Control Board have in regulating taekwondo; what recent discussions he has had with the British Taekwondo Control Board on its remit; what recent representations he has received from (i) practitioners of the sport and (ii) others on the British Taekwondo Control Board; and what response he has made to such representations. [31945]

Hugh Robertson: Governing bodies of sports are self-regulating membership organisations; therefore Sport England does not act as a regulator of taekwondo. Between them, though, Sport England and UK Sport do work with Sport Taekwondo UK Ltd (which is the body in receipt of their awards) to ensure that the public money going into the sport is being spent appropriately.

The British Taekwondo Control Board (BTCB) is the governing body recognised by the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) for WTF Taekwondo (including the Olympic discipline) in the United Kingdom.

I have had no recent discussions with the BTCB and the Department has received no direct representations from either practitioners of the sport or others on the BTCB.

CABINET OFFICE

Deaths: Winter

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 881W, on deaths: winter, what assessment he has made of the likely effectiveness of *(a)* winter resilience measures and *(b)* steps to prevent excess winter deaths since his most recent discussions with his Ministerial colleagues. [30936]

Mr Maude: Going into the winter, the UK was better prepared than at the same time last year following implementation of the key recommendations of David Quarmby's review of winter resilience. Since then, we have seen the coldest November across the UK since 1993, with the most significant snowfalls in parts of the country since 1965. As of 9 December, over £196 million is estimated to have been paid out in cold weather payments to the poorest households, and 12.9 million pensioners have received winter fuel payments to help them heat their homes. The Department of Health has also launched its annual Keep Warm Keep Well campaign for 2010-11.

Ministers have met to review preparedness for further severe weather and the Secretary of State for Transport asked David Quarmby on 1 December to conduct an urgent audit of transport operators' performance following the heavy snow in November and of their progress in implementing the recommendations from his review published in October and to recommend any further steps that need to be taken to further enhance our resilience. The Government will respond promptly to his recommendations which are expected before Christmas.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how much his Department spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28138]

Mr Maude: The information requested is available only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31190]

Mr Maude: The estimated annual increase in expenditure as a direct result of the increase in the standard rate is £700,000, which is expected to be fully offset by cost reductions arising from improvements in efficiency and effectiveness.

Government Departments: Telephone Services

Mary Macleod: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether he has plans to bring forward proposals to prevent the use of 0870 and 0845 telephone numbers by central Government Departments. [29985]

Mr Maude: Decisions regarding the most appropriate choice of number for public sector organisations lie with these organisations. In May 2009 the Cabinet Office Contact Council published a guide to number ranges for public sector organisations and updated this guide in February 2010. This guide includes a recommendation that Government Departments should consider the cost of accessing the service to make sure that citizens on low income can afford to make contact

Internet: Data Protection

Ian Lucas: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will take steps to increase the level of *(a)* public awareness of the information collected by internet search engines and *(b)* the laws which apply to the use of such information. [30341]

Mr Vaizey: I have been asked to reply.

The Government are currently implementing the various requirements of the revised European Framework on Telecommunications, which are expected to be completed by June 2011. Enhanced user privacy is a key element of the new measures and will enable users to exercise more control over their personal data. Additionally, rules concerning privacy and data protection will be strengthened ensuring that internet users are better informed about applications such as "cookies" and similar devices, as well as what happens to, and the use made of, their personal data. The general principle of the law not differentiating between an illegal act committed online and an illegal act committed offline applies in all cases. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) oversees the requirements and protections in relation to data through the Data Protection Act 1998.

Public Bodies: Telephone Services

Alun Cairns: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will take steps to prevent public bodies using 0870 and 0845 numbers; and if he will make a statement. [25697]

Mr Maude: Decisions regarding the most appropriate choice of number for public sector organisations lie with these organisations. In May 2009 the Cabinet Office Contact Council published a guide to number ranges for public sector organisations and updated this guide in February 2010. This guide includes a recommendation that Government Departments should consider the cost of accessing the service to make sure that citizens on low income can afford to make contact.

Voluntary Work: Young People

Dr Creasy: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many places he expects to be available on the National Citizenship Pilot schemes in 2011 to young people aged 16 years in each constituency. [30809]

Mr Hurd: While it is not possible to say with certainty how many National Citizen Service pilot places will be available in each constituency, owing to the geographical coverage of each pilot and the likelihood that local schemes may recruit young people from more than one constituency, I am placing in the Libraries of both Houses a list of the numbers planned in each geographical location. I have also written to the hon. Member with this information.

Voting Rights: Prisoners

Mr Buckland: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to the oral answer of 23 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 153, on prisoners (voting rights), if he will assess the merits of bringing forward proposals to restrict voting rights for prisoners to those limited to serving custodial sentences for summary offences determined by magistrates courts. [30857]

Mr Harper: The Government announced today by written ministerial statement how they intend to implement the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in relation to prisoner voting rights.

Welsh Language

Hywel Williams: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office when his Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses such schemes can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31159]

Mr Maude: The Cabinet Office Welsh language scheme is being developed and is due for publication in the new year.

EDUCATION

International League Tables

20. **Jeremy Lefroy:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent assessment he has made of the performance of schools in England against international comparators. [31441]

Mr Gibb: The OECD PISA report underlines the urgent need to reform our schools system. We need to learn from the best-performing countries which have succeeded in raising attainment for all pupils and making opportunity more equal—countries which recruit the best teachers, give greater autonomy to the front line, and make schools more accountable to their communities. It is only through such whole-system reform that we can make our nation one of the world's top performers.

Commercialisation of Childhood

21. **Fiona Bruce:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to address the commercialisation and premature sexualisation of childhood. [31442]

Sarah Teather: Parents express real concern about children being pressured into growing up too quickly, to become consumers or sexualised adults earlier than is appropriate. The Government have therefore made a commitment to take action to protect children from excessive commercialisation and premature sexualisation. I have asked Mr Reg Bailey, chief executive of the Mothers' Union, to conduct an independent review of the issue and to make a full report with recommendations in May 2011.

School Sports Funding

Mr Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent representations he has received on school sports funding; and if he will make a statement. [31430]

Michael Gove: I have received a range of representations about funding for school sport. These include: representations from Members through parliamentary questions and correspondence; letters from members of the public and interested parties; and a petition from young ambassadors of sport. There have also been representations through debates in the House on the subject.

Sheila Gilmore: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what discussions he had with Baroness Campbell and the Youth Sport Trust during his review of school sports policy. [31444]

Michael Gove: Baroness Campbell and the Youth Sport Trust have been involved closely in developing our proposals to create an Olympic and Paralympic-style school sport competition. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is leading this work and has held regular meetings with a range of interested bodies, including the Youth Sport Trust. Ministers and officials from this Department attend those meetings. The Secretary of State and I have both met Baroness Campbell in the course of developing our proposals.

Pupil Premium

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what proportion of funding for the pupil premium will come from his Department's planned budgetary provision for schools for 2011-12. [31443]

Sarah Teather: We are protecting school funding in the system at flat cash per pupil, before adding the pupil premium. School funding will rise by £3.6 billion by 2014-15; £2.5 billion of this is for the pupil premium; £1.1 billion is to cover rises in pupil numbers. The pupil premium is completely additional to the underlying settlement of flat cash per pupil.

Academies

Kevin Brennan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many academies which opened before 11 October have made arrangements under the procedure set out in the Academies Act 2010 to support an under-performing school in their area. [20046]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 28 October 2010]:* All outstanding schools that have converted to become an academy were required to commit to support a weaker school, as part of the application process. For some schools this has involved establishing a new relationship with another school and for others maintaining and improving existing links with schools they have been working with for some time.

Bromley College

Joseph Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will assess the value for money of the proposed merger between Bromley college and Orpington college. [31461]

Mr Hayes *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* I have been asked to reply.

In the event that the Secretary of State receives a formal proposal to merge from Bromley college and Orpington college it will be assessed against the published criteria for such proposals which include the criterion that the proposal is likely to provide better value for money.

Care Homes: Standards

Ann Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education pursuant to the answer of 26 July 2010, *Official Report*, column 810W, on care homes: standards, for what reasons publication of the national minimum standards for children's homes did not occur in November 2010; and what the reasons are for the time taken in publication. [29862]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* A post-consultation version of the national minimum standards for children's homes was published on the Department's website on 1 November 2010. It is available at:

http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=conResults&external=no&consultationId=1662&menu=3

This version is the near final one. It was not possible to publish an absolutely final version as some minor changes may be necessary in consequence of the revision of the children's homes regulations and statutory guidance. Consultation on the regulations and guidance closed on 19 November 2010. The responses are now being analysed with a view to publishing new revised regulations and guidance, along with the final version of the NMS, early in 2011.

Children Act 1989

Dr Thérèse Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he is reviewing the adequacy of the *(a)* provisions of the Children Act 1989 in respect of the forced removal of children and *(b)* other provisions of that Act. [27032]

Tim Loughton: Legislation relating to children and young people is reviewed as appropriate in the context of relevant policy development. We do not however believe there is a need to review the specific provisions in the Children Act 1989 with regard to the taking of children into care against their parents' wishes. The law is clear that children should live with their parents wherever possible. However, action must be taken if a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where a child is taken into care on a care order the court is required to treat the welfare of the child as its paramount consideration.

Departmental Manpower

Mr Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many members of staff are employed in the ministerial correspondence unit of his Department. [27205]

Tim Loughton: The Department employs 14.7 full-time equivalent staff who are responsible for ministerial correspondence.

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many officials have *(a)* joined and *(b)* left the private office of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families since May 2010; on what dates; for what reasons; and if he will make a statement. [28863]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* There have been no changes to my private office staff since May 2010.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Matthew Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Education to which local newspapers his Department had a subscription between June 2007 and May 2010; on what date each such subscription started; and what the cost to the public purse was of such subscriptions. [24428]

Tim Loughton: The Department and its predecessor had no subscriptions with local newspapers during the period in question.

Departmental Written Questions

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many and what proportion of questions tabled to the Secretary of State and his predecessor for written answer on a named day were answered substantively before or on the day named for answer *(a)* in Session 2009-10 and *(b)* since May 2010; how many such questions tabled between May 2010 and 12 November 2010 had not received a substantive answer by 18 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to his Department of answering a named day question on the day named for answer in the latest period for which figures are available. [25957]

Tim Loughton: The Government have committed to providing the Procedure Committee with sessional statistics in a standard format on the time taken to respond to written parliamentary questions for the 2009-10 Session. During the parliamentary Session 2009-10 the Department received 368 named-day PQs. This information will be submitted to the Procedure Committee shortly.

Since May 2010 the Department has received 430 named day parliamentary questions, out of which 70 (16%) were answered on the specified named day.

The Department received 373 named-day parliamentary questions between May 2010 and 12 November 2010, out of which 346 (93%) were answered by 18 November 2010.

The estimated cost to the Department in answering a written parliamentary questions is £154 per written question.

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many and what proportion of questions tabled to the Secretary of State and his predecessor for ordinary written answer *(a)* in Session 2009-10 and *(b)* since May 2010 were answered within (i) seven days and (ii) 14 days of tabling; how many such questions tabled between May 2010 and 12 November 2010 remained unanswered by 18 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to his Department of answering a question for ordinary written answer within seven days of tabling in the latest period for which figures are available. [25958]

Tim Loughton: The Government have committed to providing the Procedure Committee with sessional statistics in a standard format on the time taken to respond to written parliamentary questions for the 2009-10 session. This information will be submitted to the Procedure Committee shortly.

The Department received 1,298 ordinary written parliamentary questions between May 2010 and 12 November 2010, out of which 362 (28%) were answered within 10 days (the Department only collects management information on parliamentary questions answered within five and 10 days). A total of 42 (less then 1%) remained unanswered by 18 November 2010.

The estimated cost to the Department in answering a written parliamentary question is £154 per written question.

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many written questions tabled for answer on a named day received a *(a)* holding reply and *(b)* substantive response on the day they were due for answer from each Minister in his Department since 11 May 2010. [29707]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* The information requested is in the following table:

Minister	*Substantive responses issued on the due day*	*Holding replies issued on the due day*	*Total*
Nick Gibb	25	298	323
Sarah Teather	8	49	57
Tim Loughton	14	49	63
Total	47	396	443

Education Maintenance Allowance

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education on what date his Department's contract with Capita to deliver the education maintenance allowance will expire; and how much his Department will pay to Capita for the remainder of the contract. [28179]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who operate the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, will write to the hon. Member for Scunthorpe with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Libraries.

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many young people have received education maintenance allowance payments in *(a)* Blackpool and *(b)* England since the creation of the scheme. [29868]

Mr Gibb [*holding answer 9 December 2010*]: This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who operate the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member for Blackpool South with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Libraries.

Letter from Peter Lauener, dated 9 December 2010:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question PQ29868 that asked:

"How many young people have received education maintenance allowance payments in (a) Blackpool and (b) England since the creation of the scheme."

EMA take-up is defined as young people who have received one or more EMA payments in the academic year.

Academic year	*Take-up in Blackpool*	*Take-up in England*
2004/05	704	297,568
2005/06	1,318	430,327
2006/07	1,827	526,808
2007/08	2,022	547,235
2008/09	2,022	576,144
2009/10	2,374	644,497
2010/11	2,167	[1]586,221

[1] As of 30 November 2010.

In comparing across years, it is important to understand that national roll-out was phased over several years. In the first year EMA was available to all 16-year-olds across England and to 17 and 18-year-olds in former pilot areas. In 2005/06 EMA was available to all 16 and 17-year-olds nationally. From 2006/07 EMA was available to all 16, 17 and 18-year-olds nationally.

EMA take-up data showing the number of young people who have received one or more EMA payments during 2004/05, 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08 2008/09 and 2009/10 is available on the YPLA website, at the following address:

http://ema.ypla.gov.uk/resources/research/takeup/

Education Maintenance Allowance: Brighton

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many students normally resident in Brighton Pavilion constituency receive education maintenance allowance; and what estimate he has made of the number who will receive an allowance following the implementation of proposals in the comprehensive spending review. [28758]

Mr Gibb: This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who operate the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member for Brighton Pavilion with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Libraries.

Letter from Peter Lauener, dated 8 December 2010:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question PQ28758 that asked:

"How many students normally resident in Brighton Pavilion constituency receive education maintenance allowance; and what estimate he has made of the number who will receive the allowance following the implementation of proposals in the Comprehensive Spending Review."

Information on the number of young people who have received EMA is available at Local Authority level, but not at constituency level. EMA take-up is defined as young people who have received one or more EMA payments in the academic year.

As at 30th November 2010, the number of young people in Brighton and Hove local authority area who had received one or more EMA payments during the 2010/11 academic year was 2,604.

From 2011/12, Education Maintenance Allowances will be replaced by an enhanced learner support fund that will be administered by schools and colleges themselves, targeting those young people who face a real financial barrier to participation. The number of young people who benefit from these new arrangements will reflect local decisions so it is not possible to judge how many will receive financial support in future.

EMA take-up data showing the number of young people who have received one or more EMA payments during 2004/05, 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 is available on the YPLA website, at the following address:

http://ema.ypla.gov.uk/resources/research/takeup/.

Education Maintenance Allowance: Bristol

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many young people were in receipt of education maintenance allowance in (*a*) Bristol East constituency and (*b*) Bristol in each of the last five years. [28230]

Mr Gibb: This is a matter for the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who operate the education maintenance allowance for the Department for Education. Peter Lauener, the YPLA's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member for Bristol East with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Libraries.

Letter from Peter Lauener, dated 8 December 2010:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question PQ28230 that asked:

"How many young people were in receipt of education maintenance allowance in (a) Bristol East constituency and (b) Bristol in each of the last five years."

Information on the number of young people who have received EMA is available at Local Authority Level, but not at constituency level. EMA take-up is defined as young people who have received one or more EMA payments in the academic year.

EMA take-up for the City of Bristol Local Authority area is:

Academic year	*Take-up*
2006/07	3,676
2007/08	3,961
2008/09	3,878
2009/10	4,714
2010/11(as at 31 October)	3,835

EMA take-up data showing the number of young people who have received one or more EMA payments during 2004/05, 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08 2008/09 and 2009/10 is available on the YPLA website, at the following address:

http://ema.ypla.gov.uk/resources/research/takeup/

Free Schools: Social Services

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will take steps to ensure that new schools established by parents under the free schools programme follow his Department's guidance on the referral of suspected child abuse cases to children's social services. [7940]

Mr Gibb: Free schools, like academies, will be required to follow the Department's guidance on the referral of suspected child abuse cases to children's social services

General Teaching Certificate

Mr Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate his Department has made of the number of people who gained a General Teaching Certificate in 2009 and who are still seeking teaching jobs. [29423]

Tim Loughton: The latest available number and percentage of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) by their employment status is given in the following tables. The scope of these figures is NQTs who have gained Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) via mainstream initial teacher training courses, and the tables report their employment status six months after gaining QTS.

Newly Qualified Teachers: Employment status six months after gaining QTS

Coverage: England

		Number of NQTs				
2008/09	*Teachers gaining QTS Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs)*	*In a teaching post*	*Seeking a teaching post*	*Not seeking a teaching post*	*Unclassified*	*Total*
	26,650	21,550	1,750	1,160	2,190	26,650

Coverage: England

		Distribution of NQTs (percentage)					
2008/09	*Teachers gaining QTS Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs)*	*In a teaching post*	*Seeking a teaching post*	*Not seeking a teaching post*	*Unclassified*	*Total*	*Proportion of NQTs in a teaching post who sought/are seeking a post*
	26,650	80.9	6.6	4.4	8.2	100.0	92.5

Notes:

1. Excludes teachers gaining QTS via employment based routes to ITT.
2. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

IDA Performance Profiles

Lone Parents

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will bring forward proposals to tackle parental alienation syndrome by strengthening the shared parenting aspect of the Children Act 2004. [26459]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 25 November 2010]:* The coalition Government's programme for government makes clear our intention to encourage shared parenting. One of the principles governing the work of the Family Justice Review is that the positive involvement of both parents should be promoted post-separation. The review panel will be issuing an interim report in the spring on its proposals for reforming the family justice system, ahead of a national consultation. The panel will issue its final report in autumn 2011 and we shall consider at that point how best to respond to its conclusions, including the potential need for changes to legislation to promote shared parenting.

School: Sports

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education on which dates he had discussions with the Secretary of State for *(a)* Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport and *(b)* Health prior to his announcement that funding for school sport was to be reduced; and what the duration was of each such meeting. [29297]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 7 December 2010]:* The Secretary of State has overall responsibility for education and, since May, has negotiated a spending review settlement for schools, which sees real-terms growth in school funding at a time when cutting the budget deficit is an urgent national priority, and published the Government's new approach to education in the schools White Paper, "The Importance of Teaching". The Secretary of State has had a number of meetings with the Secretaries of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport and for Health, including at regular Cabinet meetings, to discuss these education priorities, which necessarily impact on PE and sport, as on other areas of school life. The Secretary of State has also met the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport on a number of further occasions to discuss the coalition Government's commitment to encourage more competitive school sport through the creation of Olympic and Paralympic-style competitions.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families also sits on a Department for Culture, Media and Sport Committee on the school Olympic and Paralympic-style competition with the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport which is scheduled to meet weekly.

Schools: Crimes of Violence

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education pursuant to the answer of 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 107W, on teachers: training, if he will identify and evaluate independent research on the incidence of violence against women and girls in schools undertaken in the last 12 months. [30254]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* The Department is aware of research into violence against women and girls in schools undertaken in the last 12 months from (a) Womankind Worldwide in England, and (b) the End Violence Against Women Poll conducted by YouGov.

The Department for Education takes violence against women and girls in schools very seriously and will be tackling the issue in a number of ways, including:

working with teachers, parents, faith groups and campaign groups to ensure young people receive high quality sex and relationship education;

conducting an independent review into the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood;

contributing to the Frank Field review of child poverty and the Graham Allen work on early intervention;

holding an internal review into personal, social, health and economic education (the most commonly used approach by schools for teaching about violence towards women and girls).

Science and Mathematics: Teachers

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has for the future of science and mathematics teaching in schools. [31446]

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to improve the standard of science and mathematics teaching in schools. [31445]

Mr Gibb: The Schools White Paper "The Importance of Teaching" recognises the importance the Government attach to science and mathematics education. We will support initiatives to increase the number of specialist science and mathematics teachers and to improve the skills of existing teachers. We will also review the national curriculum to ensure that children gain the knowledge they need in maths and science in order to progress and develop their understanding.

Social Services: Adoption

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether social services have targets in respect of the number of adoption cases processed in each year. [26120]

Tim Loughton: I have made it clear that I want to see an increase in the number of children appropriately placed for adoption and in the speed with which decisions are made. I am not in favour of setting targets to achieve this as each adoption case should be assessed on its own merits. However I expect to see improvements in practice and in the sharing of good practice. That is why, at national level, I have set up a ministerial advisory group to provide expert advice on a range of practical proposals to facilitate this.

Young People: Carers

Michael Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of young carers in *(a)* the south-east and *(b)* Sevenoaks constituency. [29167]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: Precise local and national data on the number of young carers are not held centrally. However the 2001 census estimates that there are approximately 139,000 children in England aged 17 or under offering some care to a family member, neighbour or friend.

Helping to care for a family member is something that many young people are happy and proud to do. These young people play an absolutely vital role both for their families and society as a whole and they deserve our recognition and support. The Department for Education with the Department of Health is absolutely committed to supporting local services including many voluntary organisations which have been set up to support these young people.

However in some cases these young people need protection from excessive or inappropriate caring that puts their education and/or health at risk. I attended the Young Carers Festival last summer as I have done for a number of years and have heard directly about their concerns. They told me that services supporting their parents or other family members all too often do not consider their views or identify and respond to their support needs, even though these might be critical to the care they are providing.

The Government recently published "Recognised, valued and supported: next steps for the Carers Strategy". They recognise that there are a number of "hidden" young carers and encourage front-line services including schools, GPs, mental health and substance misuse to put in place systems to identify and respond to young carers needs. They also encourage local authorities to consider adopting the "Working together to support young carers" published jointly by the Association of Directors of Adult and Children's Services which is unambiguous in stating that no care package should rely on a young person taking on inappropriate caring roles.

Youth Services: Disability

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many youth centres that are operated by local authorities provide activities for disabled children and their families in *(a)* the west midlands and *(b)* England. [29333]

Tim Loughton: The Department for Education does not hold this information centrally. However, local authorities are responsible, under the general equality duty contained in the Disability Discrimination Act, to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people, encourage participation by disabled people and take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities in respect of the services that they provide—so in providing such services as youth centres, local authorities should be considering the needs of the disabled children who use them.

Youth Sport Trust

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have had recent meetings with Baroness Campbell of Loughborough to discuss the work of the Youth Sport Trust. [27138]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 29 November 2010]*: Baroness Campbell and the Youth Sport Trust have been involved closely, since May 2010, in developing the Government's proposals to encourage more competitive school sport through the creation of Olympic and Paralympic-style school sport competitions. This is the focus of the Government's work, as set out in the "Coalition Programme for Government". The Department for Culture, Media, and Sport is leading this work for Government and, since May, has held regular meetings with a range of interested bodies, including the Youth Sport Trust. Ministers and officials from the Department for Education attend those meetings, and so have been able to hear and consider fully the advice of Baroness Campbell and the trust's staff. The Secretary of State and I have both met Baroness Campbell in the course of developing the Government's proposals. Sport England has recently consulted on an interim role for the Youth Sport Trust, working for Sport England to deliver elements of the Government's proposals, funded by the lottery.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Cold Weather Payments

Paul Goggins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* financial and *(b)* other support is available to help people meet their winter heating costs; and whether any additional support is available specifically to incapacity benefit claimants. [31545]

Steve Webb: Individuals who have reached women's state pension age, will receive a winter fuel payment to help meet the cost of their winter fuel needs. Households with someone aged up to 79 will receive £250 while those households with someone aged 80 or over receive £400.

Cold weather payments of £25 a week are paid in periods of very cold weather to those in receipt of pension credit or income related employment and support allowance who receive the support component or the work-related activity component. Recipients of income support, income related employment and support allowance or income-based jobseekers allowance may also be entitled to a cold weather payment if they have a pensioner or disability premium included in their benefit, or they have a child who is either disabled or under the age of five in the family.

Disabled people can face extra heating costs but, by and large, these needs arise all year round. Benefits such as incapacity benefit and employment and support allowance provide additional weekly payments and are related to the individual's circumstances.

The Department for Work and Pensions also works closely with other Government Departments on the 'Keep Warm Keep Well' campaign, which is aimed at vulnerable households in England and gives information on the health benefits of keeping warm in winter and details of the grants and benefits available.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's annual budget for conferences was on *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30021]

Chris Grayling: The Department does not allocate a budget for the provision of conferences.

The Department revised its internal policies and guidance in July 2010 with the clear intention of reducing costs. The use of an external venue for any business meeting, including conferences, should now be exceptional and requires the advance approval of a member of the senior civil service.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31224]

Chris Grayling: No staff employed by the Department for Work and Pensions in London are paid less than a rate equivalent to the London living wage. Department employs 3,529 staff outside London, who earn less than a rate equivalent to the London living wage.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31174]

Chris Grayling: Departmental Spending Review settlements are set on a tax-inclusive basis, including the increase to the standard rate of VAT.

Departments can recover VAT that they incur on certain contracted out services.

The increase in the Departments annual expenditure due to the change in the standard rate of value added tax on non-recoverable VAT has been estimated at £16 million per annum.

Departmental Regulation

Mr Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what regulations he plans to *(a)* repeal and *(b)* amend in the next five years. [23084]

Chris Grayling: It is not possible to accurately project which regulations will be removed/amended over the course of the next five years.

Departmental Sponsorship

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what expenditure *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the non-departmental public bodies incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [27526]

Chris Grayling: The information is as follows:

(a) Department for Work and Pensions

The Department's expenditure on sponsorship is captured within the data for overall spend on marketing and publicity. It is not possible to separate out specific payments for sponsorship without incurring disproportionate cost. Since 2007, the policy for the corporate centre of the Department has been that we do not actively seek or undertake sponsorship opportunities. Sponsorship falls within the current restrictions on marketing and advertising expenditure.

(b) Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission

The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission agreed a one-year partnership (January 2009 to January 2010) with Wikivorce, at a cost of £10,000, for them to carry a branded Child Maintenance Options microsite on their website. This was the first and, to date, only commercial partnership trial and was designed to target parents at an early stage of separation. Wikivorce is one of the largest online communities supporting people through relationship breakdown where the majority of visitors are parents with an even male and female split in the audience.

Health and Safety Executive

The Health and Safety Executive's expenditure on sponsorship is captured within the data for overall spend on marketing and publicity. It is not possible to separate out specific payments for sponsorship from this data.

Remploy Ltd

Remploy's expenditure on sponsorship is captured within the data for overall spend on marketing and publicity. It is not possible to separate out specific payments for sponsorship from this data.

Other non-departmental public bodies

The following non-departmental public bodies have confirmed that they have not incurred any expenditure on sponsorship:

Disability Employment Advisory Committee
Disability Living Allowance Advisory Board
Equality 2025
Industrial Injuries Advisory Council
Independent Living Fund
National Employment Savings Trust corporation
Pension Protection Fund
Pensions Ombudsman/Pension Protection Fund Ombudsman
Social Security Advisory Committee
The Pensions Advisory Service
The Pensions Regulator.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow East (Margaret Curran) of 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 74W, on disability living allowance, what estimate he has made of the number of residential care residents who will cease to be entitled to the higher rate mobility component of the disability living allowance from October 2012. [31045]

Maria Miller: We estimate that approximately 40,000 people who claim the mobility component of disability living allowance at the higher rate and live in residential care will be affected by the measure to cease paying the mobility component in Great Britain from October 2012.

Disability Living Allowance: Medical Examinations

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the cost of implementing the proposed objective medical assessment for disability living allowance claim in 2013-14; and if he will make a statement. [29771]

Maria Miller: It is proposed that disability living allowance will be replaced by personal independence payment from April 2013, with an objective assessment that takes account of the social model of disability as an integral part of that benefit. The cost of implementing the personal independence payment is dependent on the design of the new objective assessment and how it is delivered. The current consultation exercise will help inform these decisions. The Government will set out further detail at the earliest opportunity.

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent progress he has made on the public consultation in respect of the proposed objective medical assessment for disability living allowance claims; and if he will make a statement. [29772]

Maria Miller: The Government launched a public consultation on the reform of disability living allowance with a new benefit, personal independence payment, on 6 December. The consultation sets out our proposed approach to the objective assessment for the new benefit and invites comment on these proposals. A copy of the consultation document "Disability Living Allowance reform" (Cm 7984), has been placed in the Library and is also available from our website at:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2010/dla-reform.shtml

The public consultation on the reform of disability living allowance will run from 6 December to 14 February 2011, after which we will publish a response.

Housing Benefit

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment his Department has made of the change in the number of private sector properties capable of being rented at the level of local housing allowance payments or below consequent on his Department's proposed changes to housing benefit. [29733]

Steve Webb: The Department published a document on 'Impacts of Housing Benefit proposals: Changes to the Local Housing Allowance to be introduced in 2011-12' on 23 July, which includes an indication of post-reform availability of private sector accommodation in tables 9,10 and 11. A copy of the document has been placed in the Library.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of housing benefit received *(a)* flat-rate and *(b)* non flat-rate deductions for (i) heating, (ii) hot water, (iii) lighting and (iv) cooking in the latest period for which figures are available. [30669]

Steve Webb: Information is not available on housing benefit recipients who have deductions from their rent in respect of costs for heating, hot water and lighting.

The Department does collect some information on deductions from rent, in relation to private tenant boarders for cooking, from the Housing Benefit data Source (SHBE) but to assess the completeness of recording and quality assure the figures to answer this PQ would incur disproportionate cost.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number and proportion of claimants of local housing allowance that made an additional payment to cover the difference between benefits received and rent paid; and what estimate he has made of the average amount of such weekly additional payments in each local authority by bedroom size in the latest period for which figures are available. [31355]

Steve Webb: A review of the first two years' operation of the local housing allowance arrangements is being undertaken to monitor the impact of the local housing allowance at a national level. The review aims to cover a range of issues including levels of excesses and shortfalls. The two year review will be published shortly.

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the monthly *(a)* on-flows to and *(b)* off-flows from local housing allowance in each local authority were in each month since April 2008. [31807]

Steve Webb: Information on local housing allowance on-flows and off-flows is not available.

Experimental statistics of monthly housing benefit on-flows and off-flows are published on the Department's website at:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/hb_ctb/hbctb_flows_nov10.xls

but this information relates to all housing benefit recipients.

Housing Benefit: Ashfield

Gloria De Piero: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many recipients of housing benefit who have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance for more than 12 months are resident in Ashfield constituency; [31133]

(2) how much on average was paid in housing benefit to recipients in Ashfield constituency in the latest period for which figures are available. [31134]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

Neither the total number of jobseeker's allowance claimants receiving housing benefit nor the duration of such claims is available. This analysis has not been quality assured to national statistics standard, and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

Housing Benefit: Birmingham

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of people in Birmingham, Ladywood constituency who will be affected by his proposed changes to housing benefit. [31123]

Steve Webb: This information is not available.

At present geographic breakdowns are available at the local authority or regional level, as data are provided by local authorities.

However, an exercise is being undertaken to add other geographical areas to the data: this will include parliamentary constituencies. This exercise will consist of validating postcodes and partial postcodes, using them to allocate cases to the appropriate geographical area using the revised ONS coding system, and resolving cases with missing or invalid postcodes. Analysts will then assess how best to incorporate this method into the regular processing of the HB/CTB returns from LAs. It is hoped this exercise will be completed by early 2011.

Housing Benefit: Edinburgh

Sheila Gilmore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how much *(a)* local housing allowance and *(b)* housing benefit on average was paid to recipients in each type of housing tenure in Edinburgh East constituency in the latest period for which figures are available; [29533]

(2) how many people in Edinburgh East constituency receive local housing allowance; [29535]

(3) what proportion of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance recipients in (i) local authority, (ii) housing association and (iii) private sector housing in Edinburgh East constituency were also in receipt of (A) jobseeker's allowance and (B) employment and support allowance in the latest period for which figures are available; [29534]

(4) how many recipients of local housing allowance who have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance for more than 12 months live in Edinburgh East constituency. [29538]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

At present geographic breakdowns are only available for local authorities and regions. However, an exercise is being undertaken to add other geographical areas to the data: this will include parliamentary constituencies.

Housing Benefit: Expenditure

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the likely effect on his Department's expenditure on housing benefit of his proposals for affordable rent for social housing. [26024]

Steve Webb: Work between DWP and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is ongoing on the impact on housing benefit of the proposals for affordable rent for social housing. Further details will be made available shortly, but initial indications in the spending review period were that the impact on housing benefit expenditure will be relatively small.

Housing Benefit: Glasgow

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average amount of housing benefit paid by tenure in Glasgow North constituency was in the latest period for which figures are available; what the average amount of local housing allowance paid to occupants of properties in each type of tenure in Glasgow North constituency was in that period; and what proportion of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance recipients in (i) local authority, (ii) housing association and (iii) private sector housing in Glasgow North constituency were also in receipt of (A) jobseeker's allowance and (B) employment and support allowance in that period. [30517]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

At present geographic breakdowns are available only for local authorities and regions. However, an exercise is being undertaken to add other geographical areas to the data: this will include parliamentary constituencies.

Information is collected on the number of claimants in receipt of a passporting benefit, which includes income-based jobseeker's allowance and income-based employment support allowance. However neither the total number of jobseeker's allowance claimants nor the total number of employment support allowance claimants receiving housing benefit is available.

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Glasgow North constituency receive local housing allowance. [30521]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

At present geographic breakdowns are only available for local authorities and regions. However, an exercise is being undertaken to add other geographical areas to the data: this will include parliamentary constituencies.

Housing Benefit: Reform

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the *(a)* research commissioned and evaluated by his Department and *(b)* representations he has received since the announcement of his proposals for reforming housing benefit. [30350]

Steve Webb: We have considered relevant research published since the Budget announcement. We have also taken note of the views and concerns of stakeholders in relation to the implementation of the 2011 changes to Local Housing Allowance rates. As a consequence we are bringing forward the timing of the reduction of rates to the 30 percentile from October 2011 to April 2011. This avoids people being affected twice, first by the cap from April and then again after October. We are giving existing customers more time to adjust to any reduction in entitlement by giving them up to nine months transitional protection from the anniversary date of the claim. In addition we are providing a further £50 million over the spending review period towards the provision of housing advice and other practical support to help customers during the transition period.

Housing Benefit: Refuges

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the monetary value of the average weekly housing benefit payment made to those staying in women's aid refuges. [31029]

Steve Webb: Information on housing benefit payments made to those staying in women's aid refuges is not available.

Information is collected on the number of claimants and average weekly award in payment by tenure of claimant. Tenure types are: social rented sector (which can be further broken down into local authority tenants and registered social landlord tenants) and private rented sector (which can be further broken down into private regulated tenants and private deregulated tenants (local/non-local housing allowance tenants)).

Housing Benefit: Scotland

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was paid on average in *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance by tenure in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency in the most recent 12 months for which figures are available; what proportion of recipients of (i) housing benefit and (ii) local housing allowance in (A) local authority, (B) housing association and (C) private sector housing in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency were also in receipt of (1) jobseeker's allowance and (2) employment and support allowance in the most recent 12 months period for which figures are available. [30076]

Steve Webb: The information is not available at the constituency level.

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of local housing allowance who have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance for more than 12 months are resident in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency. [30119]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

At present geographic breakdowns are only available for local authorities and regions. However, an exercise is being undertaken to add other geographical areas to the data: this will include parliamentary constituencies.

Housing Benefit: Sunderland

Julie Elliott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of local housing allowance who have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance for more than 12 months are resident in Sunderland Central constituency. [30365]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

Neither the total number of jobseeker's allowance claimants receiving housing benefit nor the duration of such claims is available. This analysis has not been quality assured to national statistics standard, and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

Housing Benefit: Temporary Accommodation

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the monetary value of the average weekly housing benefit payment made to households in *(a)* temporary accommodation and *(b)* bed and breakfast accommodation. [31030]

Steve Webb: Information on housing benefit payments made to households in temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast accommodation is not available.

Information is collected on the number of claimants and average weekly award in payment by tenure of claimant. Tenure types are: social rented sector (which can be further broken down into local authority tenants and registered social landlord tenants) and private rented sector (which can be further broken down into private regulated tenants and private deregulated tenants (local/ non-local housing allowance tenants)).

Housing Benefit: Worcestershire

Sajid Javid: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* Worcestershire and *(b)* Bromsgrove constituency were in receipt of housing benefit of more than £400 per week in the latest period for which figures are available. [29700]

Steve Webb: As at August 2010, our records show that there are fewer than five housing benefit recipients in both Bromsgrove and Worcestershire receiving more than £400 per week in housing benefit.

Income Support: Mortgages

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the effects of the change to the rate used to calculate support for mortgage interest payments from 1 October 2010 on the number of people entitled to passported benefits; [31033]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of individuals entitled to support for mortgage interest payments who ceased to receive *(a)* pension credit, *(b)* income-related jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* income-related employment and support allowance payments following the change to the interest rate used to calculate support for mortgage interest payments from 1 October 2010. [31034]

Steve Webb: This information is not available.

Jobcentres: Greater London

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many square metres on average Jobshops located in London occupy; and what the *(a)* smallest and *(b)* largest size is of such premises; [31546]

(2) how many square metres on average Jobshops located in London which provide the full Jobcentre Plus service occupy; and what the *(a)* smallest and *(b)* largest site is of such premises. [32104]

Chris Grayling: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Darra Singh. I have asked him to provide the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Ruth Owen:

The Secretary of State has asked Darra Singh to reply to your questions asking how many square metres on average Job centres located in London occupy; and what is the (a) smallest and (b) largest size of such premises. And how many square metres on average Jobcentres located in London which provide the full Jobcentre Plus service occupy; and what the (a) smallest and (b) largest site is of such premises. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to Darra Singh as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus. As Darra Singh is currently unavailable, I am replying in his absence.

All our Jobcentres in London offer the full Jobcentre Plus service. On average Jobcentres in London occupy 1,800 sqm ranging between Edmonton Jobcentre, the smallest site at 667 sqm and Bromley Jobcentre, the largest site at 5464 sqm.

Jobseeker's Allowance: Working Hours

Mary Macleod: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether there is a maximum number of unpaid hours than an individual may work per week while claiming jobseeker's allowance and actively seeking work. [29929]

Chris Grayling: We believe that volunteering can play an important part in the life of unemployed people—not only through providing valuable support to their communities but it can also improve the chances of securing paid work.

Claimants of jobseeker's allowance can therefore do unlimited voluntary work, providing they continue to meet all the usual entitlement conditions such as being available for and actively seeking work, although volunteers are allowed additional time to make themselves available for interviews and to take up employment. However, notional income may be taken into account if claimants undertake work voluntarily in circumstances where it is reasonable that they should be remunerated.

Mortgages: Government Assistance

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 795W, on mortgages: Government assistance, what *(a)* discussions he has had with and *(b)* guidance his Department has issued to mortgage providers on how to proceed with borrowers claiming support for mortgage interest mortgages with interest rates substantially higher than the standard interest rate used to calculate support payments; and if he will make a statement. [30464]

Steve Webb: We have discussions from time to time with the Council of Mortgage Lenders about support for mortgage interest. The Council of Mortgage Lenders has told the Department that it expects lenders to continue to exercise forbearance where it is fair to do so for the borrower, and the borrower has a chance of paying off any arrears in the future. The Council of Mortgage Lenders has told us that where arrears levels increase for some borrowers as a result of the change in the standard interest rate this does not necessarily translate into an immediate possession risk.

It would not be appropriate for my Department to issue specific or detailed guidance to mortgage providers about how they should manage accounts which have shortfalls. However, we have made clear our expectation that lenders should continue to offer support and forbearance to their customers who are struggling with their mortgage repayments.

Lenders are required to consider what they can do to prevent borrowers losing their homes. Under the Pre-Action Protocol, lenders must prove they have considered all other options before trying to repossess a property. For example, they may agree to change or lengthen the term of the loan, accept reduced payments in the short-term, or add the debt to the amount borrowed.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 17 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 841-42W, on mortgages: Government assistance, for what reasons he reduced the rate of interest used to calculate support for mortgage interest prior to the completion of a model to estimate the effect of changes to support for mortgage interest on the number of repossessions; when he expects such a model to be completed; and if he will place a copy of his findings in the Library. [31349]

Steve Webb: It was necessary for the Government to put support for mortgage interest on a more sustainable footing, and to better reflect mortgage costs, which is why we set the standard interest rate at a level equal to the Bank of England's published monthly average mortgage rate from 1 October. The rate is currently 3.63%. The previous rate of 6.08% was too generous and resulted in the vast majority of people getting more than their eligible mortgage interest liability, which was unfair to taxpayers. The plans of the previous Government would have meant that the standard interest rate would have reverted to a formula—the Bank of England Base Rate plus 1.58%—which, at present, would produce a rate of 2.08% from January 2011.

The Department is in the process of developing a model to estimate the impact of changes to support for mortgage interest on the number of repossessions. However any estimates will always be limited since detailed case-by-case information, such as arrears at the start of a claim, is not collected by the Department. Furthermore, the relationship between arrears and continued home ownership is a complex one dependant on more than the level of support for mortgage interest payable. The Department will consider whether the results can be used publicly, and the findings placed in the Library, once this work is complete, which we would expect to be early in 2011.

Mortgages: Repossession Orders

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the percentage change in mortgage repossessions which will occur in each of the next four quarters as a result of changes to mortgage interest support. [30215]

Steve Webb: The Department does not capture information on reasons for ending a benefit claim, including support for mortgage interest, so does not capture the number of claimants who no longer receive support for mortgage interest payments because they have been repossessed.

The Department is in the process of developing a model to estimate the impact of changes to support for mortgage interest on the number of repossessions. However any estimates will always be limited since detailed case-by-case information, such as arrears at the start of a claim, is not collected by the Department. Furthermore, the relationship between arrears and continued home ownership is a complex one dependant on more than the level of support for mortgage interest payable. The Department will consider whether the results can be used publicly once this work is complete.

The Council of Mortgage Lenders has told the Department that it expects lenders to continue to exercise forbearance where it is fair to do so for the borrower, and the borrower has a chance of paying off any arrears in the future. The Council of Mortgage Lenders thinks that where arrears levels increase for some borrowers as a result of the change in the standard interest rate this does not translate into an immediate possession risk.

Personal Income: Glasgow

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the median household income of a family in *(a)* the social rented sector, *(b)* the private rented sector and *(c)* owner-occupied accommodation in Glasgow North constituency was (i) before and (ii) after housing costs in the latest period for which figures are available. [30515]

Steve Webb: We use households below average income data to provide estimates of median incomes. However, the sample size of this survey is not sufficient to provide estimates for low-level geographies such as those requested.

The following table shows the median equivalised disposable household income by tenure for Scotland, before and after housing costs.

Table 1: Median equivalised disposable household income, for families by tenure for Scotland, three year average 2006-07 to 2008-09, before and after housing costs

		£
	Median equivalised disposable household income for families	
Tenure type	*BHC*	*AHC*
Owners	467	424
Social renters	291	235
Private renters	346	253

Notes:

1. These statistics are based on households below average income (HBAI) data sourced from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). This uses disposable household income, adjusted using modified OECD equivalisation factors for household size and composition, as an income measure as a proxy for standard of living.
2. All estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to uncertainty. Small differences should be treated with caution as these will be affected by sampling error and variability in non-response.
3. The reference period for HBAI figures is single financial years. For countries and regions within the UK, three survey years have been combined, as single year estimates are subject to volatility
4. Incomes are presented in 2008-09 prices and have been rounded to the nearest pound sterling.
5. Families are defined as a single adult or couple living as married and any dependent children, including same sex couples (civil partnerships and cohabitees) from January 2006. A household is made up of one or more families and is defined as a single person or group of people living at the same address as their only or main residence, who either share one meal a day together or share the living accommodation (i.e. a living room). In line with the wording of the question, analysis has been carried out at the family level.

Source:

Households Below Average Income (HBAI) 2006-07 to 2008-09.

Personal Records: Departmental Co-ordination

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Tell Us Once service; and if he will make a statement; [30319]

(2) what plans he has for the future of the Tell Us Once service. [30320]

Chris Grayling: The Government are committed to making the Tell Us Once Birth and Bereavement Service available nationally during 2011.

The service is regularly reviewed as part of the Government's Gated Review process. In addition, in September 2010 a further review of the contractual arrangements required to deliver the service confirmed that Tell Us Once is a valuable service that will deliver improved customer service at lower cost for both the customer and the taxpayer.

The service is currently offered on a face to face basis at local authorities and over the phone via a national telephony service provided by my Department. It is also planned to make it available on line by the end of 2011.

Currently 85% of all local authorities have committed to offer the service. By devolving power to the local level authorities are able to tailor the service so that it supports the needs of the community.

As of today there are 42 local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales offering the Birth and Bereavement Service and in total almost 29,000 customers have chosen to use it since testing began. Customer feedback has been extremely positive and has been used to help design how the service will operate in future.

The priority for Tell Us Once will be to successfully roll out its Birth and Bereavement Service and then to increase the number of partner organisations and benefits and services in addition to the 24 it currently works with so that benefits for the customer, taxpayer and Government are maximised.

In addition, working with the private sector will be crucial so that we can provide additional services that our customers have told us they want, such as telling utilities and banks about a death. By taking this forward on a commercial basis it will enable the costs to the taxpayer to be minimised.

Tell Us Once also has the mandate to develop a Change of Address service in partnership with the private sector so that citizens no longer need to do this multiple times themselves and so that the taxpayer does not carry the cost.

Real-time Earnings Data

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department plans to pass the real-time earnings data collected for calculation of Universal Credit to *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* other public bodies. [29617]

Chris Grayling: The administration of universal credit will be organised by the Department for Work and Pensions. We are working closely with local authorities, the devolved administrations and other public bodies on the implications for them of the introduction of universal credit, but we do not currently expect that local authorities and other public bodies will need to have access to real-time earnings data.

Remploy

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* Glasgow, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the UK Remploy has employed in each of the last five years. [30395]

Maria Miller: The number of people employed by Remploy in Glasgow, Scotland and the UK for the year 2005-06 to 2009-10 are provided in the following table. The figures for Remploy enterprise businesses in Glasgow include the factories in Clydebank and Springfield.

Total Remploy staff employed in Glasgow, Scotland and the UK

		Enterprise businesses[1]	*Other employees*	*Total*
Glasgow	2005-06	168		168
	2006-07	164	33	197
	2007-08	163	39	202
	2008-09	145	37	182
	2009-10	134	55	189
Scotland	2005-06	627	77	704
	2006-07	569	103	672
	2007-08	506	115	621
	2008-09	428	125	553
	2009-10	428	144	572
UK	2005-06	5,758	1,655	7,413
	2006-07	5,446	1,676	7,122
	2007-08	3,947	1,646	5,593
	2008-09	3,200	1,773	4,973
	2009-10	3,192	1,986	5,178

[1] Including factories and Future Jobs Fund trainees (in 2009-10)

Social Rented Housing

Tom Greatrex: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the median income was of a household in *(a)* the social rented sector, *(b)* the private rented sector and *(c)* owner-occupied accommodation in (i) South Lanarkshire and (ii) Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency (A) before and (B) after housing costs in the latest period for which figures are available. [29524]

Steve Webb: We use households below average income data to provide estimates of median incomes. However, the sample size of this survey is not sufficient to provide estimates for low-level geographies such as those requested.

The following table shows the median equivalised disposable household income by tenure for Scotland, before and after housing costs.

Table 1: Median equivalised disposable household income for households by tenure for Scotland, three year average 2006-07 to 2008-09, before and after housing costs

	Median equivalised disposable household income for households	
Tenure Type	*BHC*	*AHC*
Owners	456	419
Social renters	287	233
Private renters	344	271

Notes

1. These statistics are based on households below average income (HBAI) data sourced from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). This uses disposable household income, adjusted using modified OECD equivalisation factors for household size and composition, as an income measure as a proxy for standard of living.
2. All estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to uncertainty. Small differences should be treated with caution as these will be affected by sampling error and variability in non-response.
3. The reference period for HBAI figures is single financial years. For countries and regions within the UK, three survey years have been combined as single year estimates are subject to volatility.
4. Incomes are presented in 2008-09 prices and have been rounded to the nearest pound sterling.
5. Families are defined as a single adult or couple living as married and any dependent children, including same sex couples (civil partnerships and cohabitees) from January 2006. A household is made up of one or more families and is defined as a single person or group of people living at the same address as their only or main residence, who either share one meal a day together or share the living accommodation (i.e. a living room). In line with the wording of the question, analysis has been carried out at the household level.

Source

Households Below Average Income (HBAI) 2006-07 to 2008-09

Social Rented Housing: Reform

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the outcomes were of his recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on the likely effects on the social rented housing market of his Department's proposed welfare reforms. [30931]

Steve Webb: The Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) continue to hold regular discussions at ministerial and official level on the development of policies where there is a shared interest.

The Department has made no assessment of the likely effects on the social housing market of its proposed welfare reforms. We shall publish an impact assessment on the proposed changes to housing benefit for social sector tenants from 2013 to accompany the relevant legislation when introduced in Parliament.

Social Rented Housing: Edinburgh

Sheila Gilmore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the median income was of a household in *(a)* the social rented sector, *(b)* the private rented sector and *(c)* owner-occupied accommodation in Edinburgh East constituency (i) before and (ii) after housing costs in the latest period for which figures are available. [29536]

Steve Webb: We use households below average income data to provide estimates of median incomes. However, the sample size of this survey is not sufficient to provide estimates for low-level geographies such as those requested.

The following table shows the median equivalised disposable household income by tenure for Scotland, before and after housing costs.

Median equivalised disposable household income for households, by tenure for Scotland, three year average 2006-07 to 2008-09, before and after housing costs

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4. Incomes are presented in 2008-09 prices and have been rounded to the nearest pound sterling.
5. Families are defined as a single adult or couple living as married and any dependent children, including same sex couples (civil partnerships and cohabitees) from January 2006. A household is made up of one of more families and is defined as a single person or group of people living at the same address as their only or main residence, who either share one meal a day together or share the living accommodation (ie a living room). In line with the wording of the question, analysis has been carried out at the household level.

Source:

Households Below Average Income (HBAI) 2006-07 to 2008-09

Social Rented Housing: Scotland

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the median household income was of a family in *(a)* the social rented sector, *(b)* the private rented sector and *(c)* owner-occupied accommodation in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency (i) including and (ii) excluding housing costs in the most recent 12 month period for which figures are available. [30117]

Steve Webb: We use Households Below Average Income data to provide estimates of median incomes. However, the sample size of this survey is not sufficient to provide estimates for low-level geographies such as those requested.

The following table shows the median equivalised disposable household income by tenure for Scotland, before and after housing costs.

Table 1: Median equivalised disposable household income, for families, by tenure for Scotland, three year average 2006-07 to 2008-09, before and after housing costs

	Median equivalised disposable household income for families	
Tenure Type	*BHC*	*AHC*
Owners	467	424
Social Renters	291	23[illegible]
Private Renters	346	25[illegible]

Notes:

1. These statistics are based on Households Below Average Income (HBAI) data sourced from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). This uses disposable household income, adjusted using modified OECD equivalisation factors for household size and composition, as an income measure as a proxy for standard of living.
2. All estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to uncertainty. Small differences should be treated with caution as these will be affected by sampling error and variability in non-response.
3. The reference period for HBAI figures is single financial years. For countries and regions within the UK, three survey years have been combined as single year estimates are subject to volatility.
4. Incomes are presented in 2008/09 prices and have been rounded to the nearest pound sterling.
5. Families are defined as a single adult or couple living as married and any dependent children, including same sex couples (civil partnerships and cohabitees) from January 2006. A household is made up of one of more families and is defined as a single person or group of people living at the same address as their only or main residence, who either share one meal a day together or share the living accommodation (i.e. a living room). In line with the wording of the question, analysis has been carried out at the family level.

Source:

Households Below Average Income (HBAI) 2006-07 to 2008-09

Social Security Benefits: Armed Forces

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of households of armed forces personnel in receipt of each benefit paid by his Department. [29027]

Chris Grayling: The information is not available.

Social Security Benefits: Brighton

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of local housing allowance who have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance for more than 12 months are resident in Brighton, Pavilion constituency. [31357]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

At present geographic breakdowns are only available for local authorities and regions. However, an exercise is being undertaken to add other geographical areas to the data: this will include parliamentary constituencies.

Social Security Benefits: Widowed People

Jason McCartney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether higher rate taxpayers will continue to be eligible for widowed parent's allowance when they lose their entitlement to child benefit. [31111]

Steve Webb: Higher rate taxpayers will continue to be eligible for widowed parent's allowance following the forthcoming changes to child benefit.

State Retirement Pensions

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people *(a)* receive and *(b)* contribute to a pension under the state savings related pension scheme. [30834]

Steve Webb: The information is as follows:

(a) 8,814,100 people were in receipt of additional pension payable under the state earnings related pension or the state second pension schemes in March 2010.

(b) 23,224,000 people accrued some additional pension under the state second pension scheme in the 2007-08 tax year.

Notes:

1. The state earnings-related pension (SERPS) scheme operated from 1978 to 2001 inclusive. It was replaced with the state second pension (S2P) in 2002.

2. The figure in part *(a)* refers to claimants resident in Great Britain, and is rounded to the nearest hundred individuals.

3. The figure in part *(b)* is rounded to the nearest thousand individuals. It includes employees who were contracted-out of SERPS, but accrued some S2P by virtue of class 1 earnings—that is contracted-out employees accruing some "S2P top-up". It also includes people who accrued S2P through home responsibilities protection or through credits because of their inability to work. The latest data available are for the tax year 2007-08, and are provisional.

Source:

DWP, Information Directorate, 5% sample administrative data and Lifetime Labour Market Database 1% sample of the National Insurance Recording System.

Unemployed People

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health in respect of support needed for people who are moved off benefit but not into work; and if he will make a statement. [29775]

Chris Grayling: I have had no discussions with the Secretary of State for Health, my right hon. Friend the Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr Lansley), on this specific issue although our Departments work closely together on the Government's new approach to public health and NHS reform plans.

There are a number of reasons why people move off benefits but do not move into employment, for example, many people leave benefits to take up a course of education or training. We are working closely with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to encourage the take-up of skills provision through the development of appropriate training that meets the needs of both individuals and local employers to help move unemployed people into work.

Under our commitment to reassess all existing customers currently in receipt of incapacity benefit to ensure they get the right help and support to find work, we expect many people will be found fit for work and moved off incapacity benefit. They will be able to claim jobseeker's allowance rather than leave benefits altogether. When on jobseeker's allowance they will receive enhanced personal support and flexible provision to help improve their employability.

The Work Choice programme, which provides intensive support for disabled people with more complex barriers to finding and staying in employment, is available to disabled people—provided they are both eligible and suitable—regardless of any benefits being claimed. Non benefit recipients can also access some Jobcentre Plus services such as using Jobcentre Plus job points to help them find employment.

Welsh Language

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when his Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses these can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31172]

Chris Grayling: The Department published its current Welsh language scheme on 6 August 2010. The scheme can be accessed on the web address for the Department for Work and Pensions as follows:

(a) Welsh

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/wls-welsh.pdf

(b) English

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/corporate-publications/welsh-language-scheme

The scheme has also been published on the Welsh Language Board's website: Welsh version:

http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/Cymraeg/cyhoeddiadau/Cyhoeddiadau/Cynllun%20Iaith%20Gymraeg%20-%20Adran%20Gwaith%20a%20Phensiynau.pdf

English version:

http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/english/publications/pages/publicationitem.aspx?puburl=/english/publications/publications/welsh+language+scheme+-+department+for+work+and+pensions.pdf

Winter Fuel Payments: Ex-servicemen

Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the merits of incorporating winter fuel payments into the War Pension Scheme for armed forces veterans; and if he will make a statement. [30250]

Steve Webb: Winter fuel payments are made to most people, including some 75% of war pensioners in the war pension scheme, who have reached state pension age for women and are ordinarily resident in the UK.

Older people are targeted because they are particularly vulnerable to the effects of cold weather during the winter months.

In the spending review of 20 October 2010 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Member for Tatton (Mr Osborne), announced that the winter fuel payment will remain exactly as budgeted for by the previous Government. We have no plans to extend the payment to people below the present qualifying age.

Work Capability Assessment

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of communication and feedback between Jobcentre Plus, Atos Healthcare and the First-tier Tribunal to improve the quality of decision-making relating to work capability assessments; and if he will make a statement. [29774]

Chris Grayling: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Darra Singh. I have asked him to provide the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Darra Singh:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your question about what recent assessment has been made of the effectiveness of communication and feedback between Jobcentre Plus, Atos Healthcare and the First-tier Tribunal to improve the quality of decision making relating to work capability assessments. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

As recommended in the independent review led by Professor Malcolm Harrington, Jobcentre Plus is working closely with Atos and the Tribunal Service to ensure that decisions are made as quickly and efficiently as possible. We are constantly seeking to improve the quality of our decisions and appeal responses and are currently testing a range of new measures to improve the dissemination of best practice and ensure more decisions are right first time. An example of this is our arrangements for representatives of the three organisations to meet at a regional level on a quarterly basis. This will enable an exchange of views and information which Jobcentre Plus managers will use to review and improve the quality of decision making, including those involving Work Capability Assessments.

In addition to this, we are building on existing good practices to develop more effective working relationships through a number of joint initiatives. These include quarterly meetings at regional level between representatives of the three organisations, the regular provision by Atos healthcare professionals of advice and support to Jobcentre Plus Decision Makers and Appeals staff and the use of feedback from the Tribunals Service to improve decision making.

Work Programme

Anas Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what recent progress his Department has made on delivering the Work programme; [31978]

(2) when he expects to launch the Work programme. [31977]

Chris Grayling: The Department has recently published an updated Work programme prospectus to clarify further details of the policy design and commercial arrangements of the Work programme, and intends to publish the Work programme invitation to tender before the end of December, to ensure the commercial process remains on track.

We intend to roll out the Work Programme nationally by summer 2011.

Work Programme: Glasgow

Anas Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 9, on the Work programme, what enhanced support will be provided to (1) single parents in Glasgow between the end of support provided through employment zones on 31 December 2010 and the launch of the Work programme; [31975]

(2) long-term claimants of jobseeker's allowance in Glasgow between the end of *(a)* referrals to and *(b)* support through employment zones on 31 December 2010 and the launch of the Work programme. [31976]

Chris Grayling: We want to ensure that as many people benefit from the Work programme as soon as possible, and will launch the Work programme as soon as providers are ready to start delivery in each contract package area. We aim to have the new Work programme in place nationally by the summer of 2011.

We are determined to ensure that there is continuity of provision, and that the transition to the Work programme does not leave any customer unsupported. Therefore, new deal and employment zone contracts will be extended until June 2011, ensuring that customers referred to these programmes in March will be supported until the summer, by which time the Work programme will have been rolled out.

Customers, including lone parents on income support and those on jobseeker's allowance, will have access to flexible support delivered through Jobcentre Plus, including volunteering opportunities and help with basic skills or job-search techniques, before their referral to the Work Programme. In some areas additional support will also be available, so customers can access work experience, or take advantage of peer-to-peer support. Lone parents will not be referred to the Work programme as long as they are in receipt of income support.

Once the Work programme has been launched, jobseeker allowance customers facing significant disadvantage, for example long-term benefit claimants, ex offenders, or young people with significant barriers to work, will be offered early access to the Work programme at three months, to ensure they have access to the necessary support as soon as possible.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Addison Lee

Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies contract services from Addison Lee. [30849]

Nick Herbert: The Home Department and its agencies do not hold contracts with the Addison Lee private hire taxi company. Records show that over the last 12 months the Department did on one occasion hire a coach from the company.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders: Reading Berkshire

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many anti-social behaviour orders were issued to people aged *(a)* under 18 and *(b)* 18 years or over in the criminal justice area covering Reading in each of the last 10 years. [31255]

James Brokenshire: Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) became available on 1 April 1999. The latest available published data, compiled by the Ministry of Justice, on the number of ASBOs issued covers the period 1 April 1999 to 31 December 2008. Reading is within the Thames Valley Criminal Justice System (CJS) area.

The number of ASBOs issued at all courts in the Thames Valley CJS area in each year, by age group, between 1 April 1999 and 31 December 2008 is shown in the following table.

ASBO data covering the period up to the end of 2009 is due to be published on 25 January 2011.

Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued at all courts[1] in the Thames Valley Criminal Justice System (CJS) area as reported to the Ministry of Justice[2] by the Court Service by age group, 1 April 1999 to 31 December 2008

Thames Valley

ASBOs

Age group[3]	*Total issued*	*April 1999 to May 2000*	*June to December 2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*
Total ASBOs issued	306	1	1	7	6	16	77	57	44	54	43
Of which issued to defendants:											
Aged 10-17	81	n/a		3	2	5	21	10	3	17	20
Aged 18+	215	n/a	1	3	3	10	53	45	40	37	23
Age not reported	10	1		1	1	1	3	2	1		

n/a = Not available

[1] Includes ASBOs issued on application by magistrates courts acting in their civil capacity and county courts, which became available on 1 April 1999 and ASBOs made following conviction for a relevant criminal offence at the Crown court and at magistrates courts (acting in their criminal capacity), which became available on 2 December 2002.

[2] Prior to the creation of the Ministry of Justice on 9 May 2007, numbers of ASBOs issued were reported to Home Office by the Court Service.

[3] No age details available for the period April 1999 to May 2000.

Note:

Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

e-Borders: Personal Records

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the adequacy of her Department's strategy for procuring new services for the e-Borders programme from commercial suppliers of such services against the programme's value for money objectives. [31234]

Damian Green: Since the e-Borders contract with Raytheon Systems was terminated on 22 July 2010, the e-Borders programme has been pursuing a strategy to procure services to replace those due under the original contract.

Engagement with suppliers always includes an assessment of the value for money considerations of their proposals. The Government are committed to the e-Borders programme and in line with Office of Government Commerce guidelines will continue to scrutinise potential suppliers' ability to provide the systems and services required. This scrutiny ensures delivery of Government objectives consistent with business requirements of the e-borders programme, while delivering value for money.

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the value for money of recent procurement exercises for e-Borders contracts. [31235]

Damian Green: Since the termination of the contract with the prime supplier, Raytheon Systems Limited, the e-Borders programme has been securing the services and systems that are currently in operation. Alongside this, a strategy to procure services to replace those that were due to be delivered under the original e-Borders contract has been developed. The programme is currently examining options for contracting with new suppliers and expects to be able to set out agreed next steps in the new year. All options for future services include a rigorous assessment of value for money.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30029]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office does not set budgets for spend on conferences. However, as with all activities of this nature, we are working to reduce the amount we spend and overall will be reducing our administration budget by one third by the end of the Spending Review period. Where conferences do take place the Home Office constantly seeks to ensure that any conferences that it organises are both necessary, and provide good value for money for the taxpayer.

Departmental Grants

Anas Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the monetary value of grants awarded by her Department was in 2009-10; and how much she expects to award in grants in *(a)* 2010-11 and *(b)* 2011-12; [27260]

(2) what grants have been awarded by her Department in 2010-11 to date; what grants she plans to award in each of the next two years; what the monetary value is of each such grant; and to which organisations such grants are made. [27263]

Nick Herbert: The total of grants awarded in 2009-10 was £8 billion, which included £4.7 billion in Police General Grant.

We expect to award around £8 billion in grants in 2010-11, which includes £4.7 billion in Police General Grant.

The Department is currently conducting an internal allocation exercise which will decide the future of individual grants within the overall spending review settlement for the Home Office. We will notify grant recipients on the future of these funding streams as soon as possible.

Detail on 2011-12 funding allocations for all police forces was announced on 13 December when the provisional police settlements were placed before the House of Commons.

We expect to award grants worth around £8 billion in 2010-11. This figure is as at accounting period seven.

Around £6.9 billion has been awarded for the purposes of crime reduction and policing, as set out in the tables placed in the House Library.

Around £200 million has been awarded from the UK Border Agency, as set out in the tables placed in the House Library.

Around £870 million has been awarded from the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism. This is awarded to a mixture of central Government bodies, local authorities, the police and voluntary sector organisations.

For reasons of national security, we cannot provide the detailed breakdown.

The Department is currently conducting an internal allocation exercise which will decide the future of individual grants within the overall spending review settlement for the Home Office. We will notify grant recipients on the future of these funding streams as soon as possible.

Departmental Leave

Claire Perry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what programmes *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies have in place to reduce the number of working days lost through sickness and other forms of absence. [30354]

Nick Herbert: In spring 2009 the Home Office and its agencies introduced new sickness absence policies and supporting guidance to promote the effective management of sickness absence by line managers. Stretching three year targets were also introduced to achieve significant reductions in sickness absence by March 2013.

The policies include a requirement for managers to conduct return to work interviews after every instance of sickness absence. Allowing for exceptional circumstances, mandatory warnings are given to staff whose level of absence exceeds pre-defined limits.

A new online recording system automatically prompts line managers when further interventions are required and enables senior managers to monitor whether these are taking place. The system also enables all absences to be tracked and accurate management information to be collated.

In addition, a Wellbeing strategy has been developed to promote the physical and mental health of staff. Events have been held around the country to promote the range of support services which are available to staff. Managers have access to professional occupational health advice as necessary. Staff have direct access to a 24 hour/365 day confidential Employee Assistance programme providing support, advice and counselling on a range of personal issues.

These policies have enabled the Department to reduce sickness absence month on month over the past 16 months.

Claire Perry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of *(a)* sickness and *(b)* unauthorised absence among staff in her Department and its agencies in the latest period for which figures are available. [30417]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office has put in place strict new policies for reducing sickness absence, which has produced month by month falls in the levels of sickness absence over the last 16 months. The total cost of sickness absence is therefore coming down, and the latest estimates of cost for the 33,000 employees of the Home Office and its agencies was £28.16 million for the 12 months ending June 2010. That remains, however, too high and the plan is to reduce it further.

In respect of unauthorised absence, employees who are absent from work without authorisation and fail to report their absence within 24 hours will be classed as absent without leave (AWOL). Employees who fail to make contact within five working days will have their salary withheld until further notice and are dealt with under the misconduct procedure. The number of staff classed as AWOL is small and we do not hold data relating to this type of absence centrally.

Calculating the cost of unauthorised absence could therefore be done only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Mr Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the non-departmental public bodies for which she is responsible spent on press cuttings services in each of the last 12 months. [25487]

Nick Herbert: The Department's expenditure, including that of its executive agencies and executive non-departmental public bodies, is set out in the table.

Figures quoted are inclusive of VAT and include all National Licensing Authority Fees. Extracting these costs would result in the PQ becoming unanswerable due to disproportionate cost.

All expenditure is incurred in accordance with the principles of Managing Public Money and the Treasury handbook on Regularity and Propriety.

Expenditure on press cutting service

Rounded to nearest £

	National Policing Improvement Agency	*Independent Safeguarding Authority*	*Independent Police Complaints Commission*	*Security Industry Authority*	*Serious and Organised Crime Agency*	*Criminal Records Bureau*	*Identity and Passport Service*	*Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner*	*UK Border Agency*	*Home Office HQ*
November 2009	[1]750 per quarter on electronic media service	0	2,231	676	2,459	412	6,418	0	1,015	12,564
December 2009	[1]	0	2,278	711	2,234	595	4,618	0	874	12,718
January 2010	[1]	0	3,792	584	2,263	400	5,589	0	126	16,561
February 2010	[1]	1,118	3,157	610	2,570	282	5,574	0	501	29,633
March 2010	[1]	1,477	4,071	644	3,265	292	5,085	0	2,212	27,300
April 2010	[1]	1,698	3,344	519	2,458	280	4,843	0	520	7,820
May 2010	[1]	1,563	2,477	509	1,783	290	3,189	0	339	16,269
June 2010	[1]	1,995	3,675	611	2,061	307	1,145	0	554	20,602
July 2010	[1]	770	6,109	535	2,235	371	763	0	2,224	11,530
August 2010	[1]	528	2,774	1,177	2,033	616	958	0	1,693	17,256
September 2010	[1]	523	3,874	671	2,033	502	695	0	1,610	15,379
October 2010	[1]	493	2,906	464	1,817	584	648	0	795	6,210
Total	3,000	10,165	40,688	7,711	27,211	4,931	39,525	0	12,463	193,848

[1] Indicates a brace

Departmental Procurement

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps *(a)* her Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* the non-departmental public bodies for which she is responsible have taken to comply with the Guidance of the Office of Government Commerce on promoting skills through public procurement issued in 2009. [31327]

Nick Herbert: The Home Department including its agencies and non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) fully supports the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) guidance on promoting skills through public procurement and furthering the Government's aim of improving the skills within their supplier community.

The OGC guidance has been issued to the Home Department's entire procurement community including its agencies and NDPBs advising them that there are opportunities to embed skills and apprenticeships at all stages in the procurement process.

As part of the Department's Supplier Relationship Management programme, workshops have been held with key suppliers to discuss various initiatives including work force skills. Subsequently, suppliers undertaking contracts for the Department who attended a conference, were asked to provide data as to the number of apprentices engaged on the Department's business.

Additionally, the Department uses a web-based toolkit known as CAESER. The toolkit is used to assess the risk within the supply chain and includes the collation of information on suppliers' policies and practices with regards to work force skills. Suppliers are asked to complete the assessment toolkit on an annual basis and the data is made available to commercial managers. The current exercise concludes on 31 December.

DNA: Databases

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when her Department plans to implement proposals to destroy DNA records of those who have not been convicted of any crime; [31242]

(2) when her Department plans to introduce its proposed new system for holding DNA samples. [31243]

James Brokenshire: We will bring forward a package of proposals on DNA retention in the Freedom Bill. These proposals will build on our commitment to adopt the protections of the Scottish model.

We are working with the police service so that our proposals can be implemented as soon as possible after they have received parliamentary approval.

Domestic Violence

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many multi-agency risk assessment conferences there have been in *(a)* each region of England and *(b)* Wales in each year since 2005. [31263]

Lynne Featherstone: The data for Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) were not centrally collected until 2009 and no figures exist on meetings held before 2008. The data presented reflect information from MARACs returning data for the purpose of recording MARAC activity including recording repeat incidents of domestic violence, and this may not cover all MARACs. However, the latest figures are considered to be a reasonably reliable guide by Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) who are the charity collecting this information. The following table is a summary of the information available broken down by region:

	2008		2009		2010	
Region	*Number of MARACs*	*Total number of meetings*	*Number of MARACs*	*Total number of meetings*	*Number of MARACs*	*Total number of meetings*
North-west	10	143	22	285	33	468
North-east	4	73	11	217	12	276
Yorks and Humber	9	116	19	248	21	317
East midlands	3	42	17	201	15	264
West midlands	7	98	9	154	19	282
South-west	16	196	25	296	27	406
South-east	17	207	25	253	42	509
East	9	88	19	169	20	238
Wales	4	65	14	201	22	317
London	0	0	20	190	31	413
Total	79	1,028	181	2,214	242	3,490

Notes:

1. The numbers are taken from the end of March 2008, 2009, 2010 for the previous 12 months, where a MARAC had been sending in data for less than 12 months, the numbers are the totals to date.
2. CAADA does not have a record of data for MARACs held before 2007.
3. CAADA does not have data from any London MARAC before 2008.
4. Although data recorded do not comprehensively cover all MARACs, and figures will have been influenced by improved reporting rates over this period, it is reasonable to assume that the increase in number of meetings and MARACs returning data does also indicate an increase in total numbers of MARACs in operation.

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many independent domestic violence advisers were employed in *(a)* each region of England and *(b)* Wales in each year since 2005. [31264]

Lynne Featherstone: This information is not collected centrally as independent domestic violence advisers (IDVAs) can be employed and funded by a range of different organisations. We do know that since 2004 over 900 IDVA training places have been provided by the charity Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse.

Driving under Influence: Drugs

Mr Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will make an assessment of the suitability for use by police forces of roadside drug testing equipment used by the German police. [31058]

James Brokenshire: Any equipment for use by the police in this country must be of a type approved by the Secretary of State. Type approval is granted on the basis of compliance with a specification which sets out the detailed requirements a device has to meet and the testing regime which it has to pass to be suitable for use in British operational conditions and within the British legal framework. We hope to issue very shortly the specification for a device for use in a police station and are continuing work towards the specification for a roadside device. It will be for manufacturers to submit for testing and approval any devices which they think meet the specification.

EC External Trade: India

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations she has received from EU institutions on migration of workers from India to the UK as part of the EU's free trade agreement with India. [27822]

Damian Green: The Home Office has not received any representations from the EU institutions concerning the EU-India free trade agreement.

Any contact between Her Majesty's Government and the EU on the negotiation of such agreements is a matter for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. They then consult with other Government Departments, including the Home Office, as they did on this agreement.

Entry Clearances: Overseas Students

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many certificates of sponsorship have been awarded in each of the last five years; and how many have been awarded under tier 2 of the points-based system since May 2010. [31078]

Damian Green: Tiers 2 and 5 of the points-based system were introduced on 27 November 2008.

The number of Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS) that have been issued by Tier 2 and 5 sponsors is as follows:

	Numbers of CoS issued
2008	2,095
2009	107,050
20101 (to 10 December)	111,280

Since 1 May 2010 to 10 December 2010 Tier 2 sponsors have issued 41,860 CoS. This number includes those issued under Tier 2 General, Tier 2 Intra-Company Transfer, Tier 2 Minister of Religion and Tier 2 Sportsperson routes.

These figures are based on management information and are not subject to the detailed checks that apply for national statistics. They are provisional and may be subject to change.

Mr Frank Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions she has had on reform of the student visa system. [31459]

Damian Green: The Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), has regular discussions with her colleagues and a variety of external corporate partners, covering a range of issues, including the reform of the student visa system.

Human Trafficking

Mr Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment her Department has made, together with police forces, of the outcomes of the Pentameter 1 and 2 investigations into human trafficking. [26828]

Damian Green *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* During the operational phase of the Pentameter 1 and 2 investigations, 638 people were arrested for human trafficking related and other offences and 257 potential victims, including five for trafficking for forced labour, were recovered.

Margot James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her policy is on prevention of human trafficking; and if she will make a statement. [30877]

Damian Green: Working to ensure people do not fall prey to exploitation at the hands of traffickers in the first place is an important part of our overall approach to tackling human trafficking. We work closely with international partners to prevent trafficking at source and with voluntary organisations which raise awareness of the problem within the United Kingdom.

Human Trafficking: Children

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet ECPAT UK to discuss its experience of child trafficking in the UK for the purpose of developing an appropriate comprehensive approach to child trafficking prior to her announcement of a new strategy for human trafficking in spring 2011. [30810]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking. I met with the APPG on Human Trafficking, and representatives of ECPAT UK, on 12 July 2010.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police operations to tackle the trafficking of children are in place in England. [31245]

Damian Green: Tackling human trafficking is a core part of police business. In addition, current operations concerned with tackling specific child trafficking issues in England include Operation Golf and the two multi-agency operational responses of Paladin and Newbridge.

Human Trafficking: Finance

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what funding her Department plans to provide for *(a)* actions against human trafficking and *(b)* support for victims of human trafficking in each year of the comprehensive spending review period; [31074]

(2) what funding her Department plans to provide for *(a)* actions against human trafficking and *(b)* support for victims of human trafficking in each year of the comprehensive spending review period. [31075]

Damian Green: Action against human trafficking will continue to be funded through the Serious Organised Crime Agency, UK Border Agency and general police budgets. It is not possible to disaggregate the amounts focused specifically on tackling human trafficking.

Support for victims of human trafficking will continue to be funded by both the Home Office and Ministry of Justice. The final amount is yet to be determined.

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what funding her Department provided for *(a)* actions against human trafficking and *(b)* support for victims of human trafficking in each year since 2005; [31076]

(2) what funding her Department provided for *(a)* actions against human trafficking and *(b)* support for victims of human trafficking in each year since 2005. [31068]

Damian Green: Up to 2007-08, with the exception of funding to support victims, work to tackle human trafficking was paid for from the £15.4 million Reflex fund which was established to counter organised immigration crime. It is not possible to disaggregate the amount provided specifically on human trafficking initiatives before then.

The following table provides details of funding broken down by year from the point at which it is possible to do so:

£ million

	2005-06	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*2010-11*
Support for victims of trafficking (joint funding from Ministry of Justice and Home Office)	0.620	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.95	2
Metropolitan Police Trafficking Team			1.7	0.6	0.435	

£ million

	2005-06	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*2010-11*
UK Human Trafficking Centre			0.834	1.7	1.6	1

Note
These figures exclude any expenditure from general police budgets, the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the UK Border Agency or other un-ring fenced budgets which contribute towards tackling human trafficking

Human Trafficking: Prostitution

Angie Bray: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet the Medaille Trust to discuss *(a)* the Government's proposed strategy on reducing human trafficking and *(b)* provision of half-way houses for victims of sex trafficking. [30813]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Human Trafficking: Refuges

Margot James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet the Poppy Project its London refuge for women rescued from sex trafficking and domestic slavery for the purpose of formulating her policy to reduce human trafficking. [30598]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Human Trafficking: Voluntary Organisations

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what voluntary organisations which assist the victims of trafficking she has met since 11 October 2010. [30811]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking. On 14 October 2010 I visited Stop the Traffik to mark Anti-Slavery Day. I also met with the APPG on Human Trafficking, and representatives of ECPAT UK and Anti-Slavery International, on 12 July 2010.

Home Office officials will be contacting voluntary organisations shortly to discuss development of forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Immigration Controls

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress her Department has made on the reintroduction of exit checks by 2014. [27823]

Damian Green: Our programme for government sets out our support for e-Borders and our intention to re-introduce exit checks and we are committed to do this by 2015.

The e-Borders system, which is currently checking in excess of 55% of passenger and crew movements into and out of the UK, is a key element of our border security strategy. The system allows us to screen travel document information provided in advance of travel to identify threats, including those related to terrorism, and to target the most harmful individuals.

Passports: Fraud

David T. C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of confirmed fraudulent activity detected by passport offices in 2010 was detected by the Newport Passport Office. [31063]

Damian Green: From 1 January until 30 November 2010, Newport Passport Office detected 16.1% of all confirmed passport application fraud identified by the Identity and Passport Service.

Police Community Support Officers: Nottinghamshire

Gloria De Piero: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police community support officers (PCSOs) are assigned to duties in Ashfield constituency; and whether she plans to ring-fence the budget for recruitment and retention in Nottinghamshire constabulary of PCSOs. [31277]

Nick Herbert: The Government announced on 13 December as part of the police funding settlement that the Neighbourhood Policing Fund will be maintained over the next two years, before being devolved to police and crime commissioners. About 90% of the grant is ring-fenced for police community support officers (PCSOs), contributing up to 75% of their salary costs.

Police personnel statistics are not collected by the Home Office by parliamentary constituency. Ashfield constituency is in the 'city of Nottingham' basic command unit (BCU) (area A). Latest available data show that there were 49 PCSOs on 31 March 2010 in the Nottinghamshire BCU area A.

Police: Wales

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions she has had with the Welsh Assembly Government on the proposal to include members of the National Assembly for Wales on police and crime panels. [31288]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* Policing is a reserved matter within the devolution settlement for Wales and we intend the Police and Crime Commissioner policy to apply in Wales as in England, with appropriate modifications to reflect the different local authority and community safety landscape within Wales. The Secretary of State for the Home Department met the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Social Justice and Local Government on 22 September 2010 to discuss the scope of the proposals that were to be set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill.

In addition, I have met, spoken and corresponded with the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Social Justice and Local Government on a number of occasions to discuss those provisions that impinge upon the legislative competence of the National Assembly for Wales or affect the functions of Welsh Assembly Government Ministers.

In light of these discussions, we have made provision in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill that police and crime panels in Wales will have appointed to them, by Welsh Assembly Government Ministers, a representative of the Welsh Assembly.

Public Order Offences

Mr Raab: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were *(a)* arrested and *(b)* charged with using insulting words or behaviour under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 in (i) 2000, (ii) 2001, (iii) 2002, (iv) 2003, (v) 2004, (vi) 2005, (vii) 2006, (viii) 2007, (ix) 2008, (x) 2009 and (xi) 2010. [30918]

James Brokenshire: The information requested on arrests is not available centrally.

The arrests collection held by the Home Office covers arrests for recorded crime (notifiable offences) only, broken down at a main offence group level, covering categories such as violence against the person and robbery. From these centrally reported categories it is not possible to separately identify offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986.

Data provided by Ministry of Justice on the number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986, England and Wales, from 2000 to 2009 (latest available) can be viewed in the table. Information on the number of people charged is not available centrally.

The data held by the Ministry of Justice contains information on defendants proceeded against, found guilty and sentenced for criminal offences in England and Wales. No information about the circumstances of each case is held other than that specified in a statute. It is therefore not possible to separately identify those cases in which insulting words or behaviour were used from offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act.

Number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates for offences under the Public Order Act 1986 section 5, England and Wales 2000 to 2009

	Offence description	*Statute*	*Year*	*Proceeded against*
	Total proceedings under Public Order Act 1986, section 5		2000	25,109
			2001	24,384
			2002	24,677
			2003	26,698
			2004	26,824
			2005	26,835
			2006	29,211
			2007	30,933
			2008	28,179
			2009	26,480
	of which			
125/12	Harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, section 5	2000	24,337
			2001	23,203
			2002	23,502
			2003	25,225
			2004	25,007
			2005	24,684
			2006	26,406
			2007	27,684
			2008	24,871
			2009	22,767
125/58	Racially aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, Section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 31(1)(c)&(5)	2000	772
			2001	1,181
			2002	1,165

Number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates for offences under the Public Order Act 1986 section 5, England and Wales 2000 to 2009[1, 2, 3]

	Offence description	Statute	Year	Proceeded against
			2003	1,376
			2004	1,646
			2005	1,903
			2006	2,409
			2007	2,811
			2008	2,827
			2009	3,152
125/61	Religiously aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 31(1)(c)&(5)	2000	
			2001	
			2002	1
			2003	12
			2004	16
			2005	20
			2006	36
			2007	38
			2008	44
			2009	56
125/63	Racially or religiously aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 31(1)(c)&(5)	2000	
			2001	
			2002	7
			2003	85
			2004	155
			2005	228
			2006	360
			2007	400
			2008	437
			2009	511

[1] The figures given in the table on court proceedings relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[2] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

[3] Excludes data for Cardiff magistrates court for April, July and August 2008.

UK Border Agency: Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will make it her policy that staff of the UK Border Agency should register the occasions when they use *(a)* first class rail and *(b)* air travel at fares other than the cheapest available in an official capacity in the last financial year; and what hotel accommodation was used in an official capacity by each member of staff of the UK Border Agency in the last financial year. [29747]

Damian Green: The Home Office commenced a new travel booking contract in December 2008 and since early 2009 all first class rail travel can be identified. Air travel at fares other than the cheapest available can also be logged. Aggregated spend information on first class rail travel is provided to directorates to enable them to manage the cost of travel. All those contractually entitled to first class travel are expected, given the Department's commitments to reducing costs, to consider carefully whether first class travel is justified in the light of the specific business need for the journey and the example it sets.

The need for travel at all is considered against using more cost-effective options like teleconferencing or videoconferencing, which are increasingly available throughout the agency. Managers have been asked to ensure that any claim for first-class travel is balanced with a clear business justification. There are times when travelling in a higher- fare seat is justifiable; for example on long-haul flights, especially where managers have engagements on arrival at their destination. Similarly, when travelling by rail, if seating is unavailable in economy carriages then travelling first class might be appropriate.

In the financial year 2009-10, UK Border Agency staff made 4,163 hotel bookings at a total cost of £1,775,000. These booking should be set in the context of the Agency being a global organisation employing

24,000 staff working in 137 countries, which will necessitate some travel as part of managing our business.

Welsh Language

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when her Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses these can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31167]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office agreed a new Welsh language scheme with the Welsh Language Board on 23 September 2009.

The scheme was available on the Home Office website in both English and Welsh until the general election when much of the Home Office's website content was archived for propriety. The Welsh language scheme pages were archived as part of that exercise.

The Welsh language scheme is available in both Welsh and English on the Home Office website at *(a)*:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/corporate-publications/welsh-language-scheme/

and *(b)*:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/Cymraeg

Wickham Research Laboratories: Animal Experiments

Henry Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the Written Ministerial Statement of 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 68-69WS, on the Animals Scientific Procedures Inspectorate (Wickham Laboratories), when she plans to determine whether proceedings for infringement of conditions of project licences are to be brought. [30842]

Lynne Featherstone: The Animals Scientific Procedures Inspectorate report of a review of compliance at Wickham Laboratories published on 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 68-9WS, identified a number of potential breaches of licence and certificate conditions. I have already made the decision to initiate infringement proceedings. The Home Office does not comment on the detail of infringement actions under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

Henry Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the merits of reviewing the certificate of designation issued to Wickham Laboratories. [30843]

Lynne Featherstone: In the light of the Animals Scientific Procedures Inspectorate report of a review of compliance at Wickham Laboratories published on 30 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 68-9WS, the compliance of the holder of the certificate of designation, for Wickham Laboratories, with the authorities of the certificate of designation is under review. The Home Office does not disclose the details of any infringement proceedings.

Witness Care Units: Finance

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding was provided to witness care units by police authorities in each year since 2005. [31070]

Nick Herbert: The information requested is not held centrally. The Home Office, the Department for Communities and Local Government, and the Welsh Assembly Government, provide funding to police authorities as a whole. Decisions on how police authorities distribute these resources are a matter for each police authority to determine.

JUSTICE

Antisocial Behaviour: Railways

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many convictions for antisocial behaviour on trains there were in each year since 2007. [31101]

Mr Blunt: The data held by the Ministry of Justice contains information on defendants proceeded against, found guilty and sentenced for criminal offences in England and Wales. No information about the circumstances of each case is held centrally other than that specified in a statute and it is not possible to identify the specific location where antisocial behaviour offences occurred.

Courts: Retford

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice when he expects county court cases for the Retford area to transfer to Worksop magistrates court. [31876]

Mr Djanogly: Detailed implementation plans will now be developed and stakeholders will be informed of when a court is likely to close once the plans have been completed.

There is not currently a county court in Retford and county court hearings from the Retford area are already heard at the Worksop courthouse. Family work will continue to be heard at Mansfield county court, as is currently the case.

In March 2009, the administrative functions and staff of Worksop county court were transferred to Mansfield county court. However, county court hearings and counter services continued at the Worksop courthouse. Upon the closure of Worksop county court, county court hearings will be retained at the Worksop courthouse but the counter services will cease to be available. The administrative work for Worksop county court is already dealt with at Mansfield county court and, as now, court users will continue to be able to contact Mansfield county court by a variety of methods, including telephone, post, and in person. There will also be an on-line service for some county court processes.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice whether Retford magistrates court cases will be transferred to Worksop after the implementation of his proposals for court closures. [32056]

Mr Djanogly: As explained in the consultation response paper, upon its closure the workload of Retford magistrates court will be moved to Worksop.

Crimes of Violence: Railways

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many convictions relating to violence on trains there were in *(a)* 2007, *(b)* 2008 and *(c)* 2009. [31757]

Mr Blunt: Information collated centrally by the Ministry of Justice, on convictions for criminal offences, only contains the description of the offence as given in statute. In this instance it is not possible to provide information on convictions relating to violence on trains. The circumstance of each case will be held on individual court records.

Demonstrations: City of Westminster

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what estimate he has made of the cost of the damage caused to his Department's property in *(a)* Brighton and Hove and *(b)* Hove constituency during recent disturbances connected with demonstrations. [31761]

Mr Blunt: There is no record of damage occurring to Ministry of Justice property in Brighton and Hove and Hove constituency during recent demonstrations/disturbances.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31218]

Mr Djanogly: The London Mayor's Living Wage Unit "London living wage" is currently valued at £7.85 per hour. This sum is calculated by reference to an assessment of basic living costs and an income distribution of 60th percentile of the median of incomes together with an enhancement of 15%.

Employees within the Ministry are normally employed either on pay terms known as the 'Deal', or on pay terms set by the National Offender Management Service. There are no members of staff within Greater London on these respective pay terms receiving less than the 'London living wage'. Due to past machinery of government changes, there are a small number of legacy pay systems. We do not hold any central records of employees on legacy pay terms in the Greater London area who are paid a salary less than the 'London living wage'. This information can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Procurement

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what steps *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible have taken to comply with the guidance of the Office of Government Commerce on promoting skills through public procurement issued in 2009. [31326]

Mr Blunt: The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) has taken a number of steps to ensure compliance with the guidance produced by the Office of Government Commerce on promoting skills through public procurement. However, the guidance is not intended to include non-departmental public bodies so the steps we have taken concentrate on the core Department and its agencies.

We have published our commitment to the programme on the MOJ procurement website where it is available for suppliers and members of the public to view.

We have inserted a new schedule in our standard tender documents explaining this important initiative and where appropriate, requiring tenderers to ensure that a specified proportion of hours worked on the contract are to be delivered by an employee on an apprentice or training programme.

Domestic Violence

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what funding his Department allocated to *(a)* tackling domestic violence and *(b)* providing support to victims of domestic violence in each year since 2005. [31067]

Mr Blunt: The Department did not fund any services aimed specifically at supporting victims of domestic violence prior to 2007. Since 2007, a proportion of the proceeds from the Victim Surcharge, administered by the Ministry of Justice, has been used to fund independent domestic violence advisers (IDVAs) attached to specialist domestic violence courts. These IDVAs provide specialist, one-to-one support for victims of domestic violence as they progress through the criminal justice system.

Funding was allocated on a three-year cycle and on the basis that local areas would mainstream funding into local budgets within this time. In 2010-11, £840,000 was allocated to fund 42 IDVAs. The allocation in previous years was as follows:

	£ million
2007-08	3
2008-09	2.6
2009-10	2.6

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how much his Department plans to allocate to *(a)* tackling domestic violence and *(b)* providing support to the victims of domestic violence in each year of the comprehensive spending review period; and if he will make a statement. [31257]

Mr Blunt: The Government are currently reviewing spend on services for victims and witnesses. No decisions have yet been taken.

Domestic Violence: Courts

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many specialist domestic violence courts were established in *(a)* each region of England and *(b)* Wales in each year since 2005. [31265]

Mr Djanogly: The number of specialist domestic violence courts established in each region of England and Wales since 2005 is set out in the following table:

Region	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
East midlands:	1	1	3	2	1
Eastern	1	3	2	5	
London	2	1		3	3
North-east	1	1	2	2	3
North-west	4	7	10	4	5
South-east	1	2	9		1
South-west	3	5	8	1	
Wales	4	8	2		1
West midlands	3	8	3	2	
Yorkshire/Humberside	1	7	1	4	

Ejup Ganic: Public Finance

Mr Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the total cost to the public purse was of the case brought against Ejup Ganic; and how much has been so spent on *(a)* counsel, *(b)* solicitors, including staff time, *(c)* all relevant court hearings, *(d)* the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Crown Prosecution Service, *(e)* Ejup Gain's costs awarded out of public funds and *(f)* any other relevant costs to be met from public funds. [30677]

Nick Herbert: With regard to the total costs to the public purse of the extradition request for Dr Ejup Ganic, I refer my hon. Friend to my previous reply of 8 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 118W.

The following information on costs is available.

The cost to the Home Office of counsel employed on the Ganic case was £1,597.24.

I understand from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) that the total cost of administration and in-house advocates relating to the case was £34,511. The cost to the CPS of counsel employed on the case was £76,400.

I understand from HM Courts Service that the cost of the hearings involving Dr Ganic at city of Westminster magistrates court is estimated at £7,630. This is based on the estimated national average daily marginal costs for a district judge sitting in the magistrates court. The cost of the hearings at the High Court are estimated at £2,340, again based on average costs.

Dr Ganic did not receive legal aid; a defence costs order has been made to reimburse his legal costs from central funds. However, records show that no money has been paid to date.

Gary Critchley

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice when his Department expects to respond to the application by Rowan House, Norfolk for leave for Mr Gary Critchley under section 17 of the Mental Health Act 1983. [31532]

Mr Blunt: The Department received the application on 10 December. Officials are assessing it, having regard to public protection, and expect to respond before Christmas.

HM Courts Service and Tribunals Service: Finance

Mr Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 9 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 211-2W, on HM Court Service: Wales, when he expects to determine the *(a)* funding settlement for HM Courts and Tribunals Service for 2011-12 and *(b)* level of funding to be provided by the service for North Wales for 2011-12. [31498]

Mr Djanogly: Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) is responsible for administration of courts in England and Wales. HMCS allocates financial resource to Wales and the six regions of England. From the 1 April 2011, Her Majesty's Court Service and the Tribunals Service will be integrating to form a new Agency, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS).

HMCS and Tribunals Service are yet to agree a final budget allocation for HMCTS 2011-12 and are not yet in a position to confirm when this can be expected. Subsequently HMCS is yet to agree the level of funding to be provided for North Wales for 2011-12.

Industrial Diseases: Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many Legal Complaints Service complaints relating to coalminers compensation were *(a)* unresolved and *(b)* disputed on the most recent date for which figures are available. [31905]

Mr Djanogly: The latest figures available from the Legal Complaints Service show that, as of 16 December 2010, there were six outstanding complaints relating to coal miners compensation. The LCS is expecting these cases to be closed by the end of January 2011.

Legal Aid: Cumbria

John Stevenson: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what his Department's expenditure on civil legal aid other than on family matters was in *(a)* Cumbria and *(b)* Carlisle constituency in each of the last three years. [30302]

Mr Djanogly: I refer the hon. Member to the answer that I provided him on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 499W.

Legal Aid: Social Security Benefits

Mr Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the likely effects on disabled people of *(a)* removing welfare benefits from the scope of legal aid and *(b)* means-testing for income or capital to determine eligibility for legal aid. [illegible]

Mr Djanogly: A set of impact assessments, including equalities impact assessments, were published alongside both the Legal Aid and Civil Litigation Green Papers, which include a preliminary assessment of the impact of individual proposals, including those raised in the question. The impact assessments can be found at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/consultations.htm

and respondents are invited to comment on the preliminary impacts indentified.

Legal Complaints Service: Leamington Spa

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what provision his Department plans to make for the transfer of disputed Legal Complaints Service (LCS) complaints after the closure of LCS operations in Leamington Spa. [31870]

Mr Djanogly: The Legal Complaints Service (LCS) will cease operation on 31 March 2011. Any outstanding complaints will be redirected to the Legal Services Ombudsman for completion in accordance with the Legal Services Act 2007 (Commencement No. 8, Transition and Transitional Provisions) Order 2010 that was laid in Parliament on 20 August 2010.

If complainants wish to dispute the findings of the LCS it will remain open to them to refer the matter to the Legal Services Ombudsman.

All new complaints should be directed to the new Legal Ombudsman scheme which became fully operational from 6 October 2010.

National Offender Management Service: Finance

Mr Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 8 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 68-69W, on national probation service: Wales, when he expects to announce the funding settlements for *(a)* the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), *(b)* NOMS Cymru and *(c)* the North Wales Probation Board for 2011-12. [31499]

Mr Blunt: The publication of the comprehensive spending review gave the high level funding settlements for Government Departments. Following on from the publication the Ministry of Justice and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) have been undertaking detailed modelling and planning in order to produce budgets with the required level of detail to enable the allocation of funds across their areas of business.

This process is an iterative one and although we have identified and agreed the majority of the funding allocations there are still some areas where further work is required before all the figures can be finalised.

As a consequence it is anticipated that the final allocation for NOMS will not be known until the end of December, although even then, this figure may be subject to some amendment should there be a shift in priorities.

The future structure of the National Offender Management Service is under review at present and as such the way in which funding for offender services across England and Wales is allocated will follow a different route, hence an allocation for NOMS Cymru as a whole will not be made for 2011-12.

For the individual business units covered by the National Offender Management Service, which includes the Wales Probation Trust, negotiations are ongoing and it is planned that the financial delegations will be issued in March 2011. The allocation made to Wales Probation Trust will be to deliver probation services across the whole of Wales and so will include the geographic area formerly covered by the North Wales Probation Board.

Prisoners' Release

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 118W, on prisoners' release, (1) how *(a)* long into and *(b)* far from the end of the sentence the crime was committed in each case; [31732]

(2) for what reasons there were 785 failures of licence between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2009. [31733]

Mr Blunt: The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost since this would require interrogating each of the individual incident records in order to identify, extract and collate the relevant information.

In general, temporary release failures can occur for a variety of reasons including: prisoners who are late in returning to the establishment; failure to comply with the conditions of the licence; not returning voluntarily to prison; or because prisoners may have committed an offence while on licence.

Prisoners: Per Capita Costs

Mr Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the average cost of a prison place for a category C prisoner was in the last five years. [31691]

Mr Blunt: The average direct establishment cost per prison place in Category C establishments is as follows:

Category C establishments Direct public sector establishment expenditure

	Cost per place (£)
2008-09	23,541
2007-08	23,471
2006-07	22,707
2005-06	21,976
2004-05	21,419

The costs comprise the public sector establishments' direct resource expenditure as published in the annual report and accounts of Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS). This is only expenditure met locally at each establishment.

The costs represent the total cost per place at each prison where the majorty use at the end of each year was for category C prisoners. There is no adjustment for prisons holding prisoners of more than one category.

For the last two years (2008-09 and 2007-08) an overall cost per place which also includes prison related costs met by HMPS and NOMS at regional and national level has been calculated as follows:

Category C establishments: Total overall cost of public and private establishments

	Cost per place (£)
2008-09	37,656
2007-08	34,476

The overall average cost for 2008-09 comprises the expenditure on public and private prisons (as recorded in the NOMS Agency annual report and accounts), increased by an apportionment of relevant costs borne centrally and in the Regions by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). This involves some estimation. The figures do not include the cost of prisoners held in police or court cells under Operation Safeguard, nor expenditure met by other Government Departments (e.g. Health and Education). The prisoner escort service costs are included. Expenditure recharged to the Youth Justice Board in respect of young people is included.

The overall cost for 2007-08 was calculated on a broadly similar basis.

Cost per prison place is expressed in terms of the certified normal accommodation number of places: this gives a higher unit cost than the cost per prisoner.

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many complaints have been referred to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman in each of the last three years. [31728]

Mr Blunt: The information in the following tables shows the number of complaints received by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman from prisoners, offenders who are or have been under probation supervision, and immigration detainees. Also shown is the number of those complaints deemed eligible for investigation. The other major part of the ombudsman's remit is the investigation of all deaths in prisons and immigration detention and those are not included in the figures in the tables.

Number of complaints received

	Complaints received	
	Prisoners and probation	Immigration detention
2007-08[1]	4,657	93
2008-09[2]	4,206	99
2009-10	4,538	103

	Eligible complaints received	
	Prisoners and probation	Immigration detention
2007-08[1]	1,570	49
2008-09[2]	1,773	55
2009-10	2,255	69

[1] Years are April to March.

[2] The system for recording the number of complaints changed in this year.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the cost to his Department was of the office of the prisons and probation ombudsman in each of the last three years. [31736]

Mr Blunt: Information on the expenditure of the prisons and probation ombudsman is given in the following table.

Prisons and probation ombudsman expenditure

	Cost (£ million)
2007-08	n/a
2008-09	5.37
2009-10	6.02

n/a = Not available

The PPO receives limited income from the Home Office in relation to immigration detention. The figures above are net total expenditure on all of the PPO's functions (complaints and fatal incident investigations) including for immigration detention.

Prisons: Drugs

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice in which prisons no use of controlled drugs has been detected in the latest period for which figures are available. [31269]

Mr Blunt: Prisons have achieved considerable success in reducing the drugs. Drug misuse as measured by random mandatory drug testing has fallen 68% since 1996-97.

A single episode of drug misuse over a defined period, strictly interpreted, would deprive a prison of drug free status. Over the 2009-10 financial year one prison, HMP Deerbolt, reported no drug misuse, as measured by random mandatory drug testing.

The prisons in the following list reported no drug misuse, as measured by random mandatory drug testing, in at least one month of the 2009-10 financial year.

Prisons that recorded no positive random mandatory drug tests in at least one month in 2009-10

Albany
Ashfield
Askham Grange
Aylesbury
Bedford
Belmarsh
Blantyre House
Blundeston
Brinsford
Bronzefield
Bullwood Hall
Bure
Canterbury

Prisons that recorded no positive random mandatory drug tests in at least one month in 2009-10

Castington
Channings Wood
Chelmsford
Coldingley
Dartmoor
Deerbolt
Dorchester
Downview
Drake Hall
East Sutton Park
Eastwood Park
Edmonds Hill
Elmley
Erlestoke

Exeter
Featherstone
Feltham
Foston Hall
Frankland
Full Sutton
Gartree
Glen Parva
Grendon
Highpoint
Hindley
Hollesley Bay
Holloway
Huntercombe
Kingston
Kirklevington
Lancaster
Lancaster Farms
Latchmere House
Lewes
Leyhill
Littlehey
Long Lartin
Maidstone
Moorland
Moorland Open
Morton Hall
New Hall
Northallerton
Nottingham
Onley.

Prisons that recorded no positive random mandatory drug tests in at least one month in 2009-10

Peterborough Female
Peterborough Male
Portland
Ranby
Reading
Risley
Rochester
Rye Hill
Send
Shepton Mallet
Shrewsbury
Spring Hill
Standford Hill
Stocken
Stoke Heath
Styal
Swaleside
Swansea
Swinfen Hall
Usk/Prescoed
Verne
Wakefield
Warren Hill
Wealstun
Wellingborough
Werrington
Wetherby
Whatton
Whitemoor.

The information given in this answer has been drawn from live administrative data systems which may be amended at any time. Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system. The data are not subject to audit.

Prisons: Riots

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many prisoners were involved in riots in prisons in each of the last three years; and how many prosecutions have been brought as a result. [31735]

Mr Blunt: In the last three years there have been six major disturbances, commonly referred to as riots, at HMP Ashwell and HMYOI Cookham Wood and more recently at HMYOI Warren Hill and three incidents at HMP and YOI Moorland. To date these have resulted in seven prosecutions.

30 young people were involved in the incident at Cookham Wood in 2010 resulting in seven prosecutions.

The precise numbers of prisoners actively involved in the instigation of the disturbance at Ashwell in 2009 was never determined. Many prisoners were caught up in the incident and more were affected as their accommodation became inhabitable. A total of 425 prisoners were transferred out. Despite an extensive police investigation it was not possible to prosecute any of the perpetrators.

Details of the three recent incidents at HMP and YOI Moorland and the incident at HMP Warren Hill are not available as these are still under police investigation.

Public Order Offences: Convictions

Mr Raab: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many people were convicted (1) for using insulting words or behaviour under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 in *(a)* 2000, *(b)* 2001, *(c)* 2002, *(d)* 2003, *(e)* 2004, *(f)* 2005, *(g)* 2006, *(h)* 2007, *(i)* 2008, *(j)* 2009 and *(k)* 2010; [30917]

(2) under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 in *(a)* 2000, *(b)* 2001, *(c)* 2002, *(d)* 2003, *(e)* 2004, *(f)* 2005, *(g)* 2006, *(h)* 2007, *(i)* 2008, *(j)* 2009 and *(k)* 2010. [30920]

Mr Blunt: The number of defendants found guilty at all courts for offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986, England and Wales for 2000 to 2009 (latest available) can be viewed in the table as follows.

Data held centrally by the Ministry of Justice contain information on defendants proceeded against, found guilty and sentenced for criminal offences in England and Wales. No information about the circumstances of each case is held other than that specified in a statute. It is therefore not possible to separately identify from offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act those in which insulting words or behaviour were used.

Court proceedings data for 2010 are planned for publication in the spring, 2011.

Number of defendants found guilty at all courts for offences under the Public Order Act 1986 Section 5, England and Wales, 2000 to 2009[1, 2]

Offence description	*Statute*		*Found guilty*
Harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, Section 5	2000	16,604
		2001	15,479
		2002	15,952
		2003	17,410
		2004	18,164
		2005	18,092
		2006	19,536
		2007	21,525
		[3]2008	19,988
		2009	18,249
Racially aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, Section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 31 (1)(c)&(5)	2000	461
		2001	734
		2002	710
		2003	913
		2004	1,079
		2005	1,338
		2006	1,737
		2007	2,100
		[3]2008	2,251
		2009	2,518
Religiously aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, Section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 31(1)(c)&(5)	2000	0
		2001	0
		2002	3
		2003	6
		2004	13
		2005	17
		2006	30
		2007	32
		[3]2008	30
		2009	30
Racially or religiously aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, Section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 31 (1)(c)&(5)	2000	0
		2001	0
		2002	7
		2003	71
		2004	100
		2005	161
		2006	271
		2007	314
		[3]2008	351
		2009	411
Total Public Order Act 1986 Section 5		2000	17,065
		2001	16,213
		2002	16,672
		2003	18,400
		2004	19,356
		2005	19,608
		2006	21,574
		2007	23,971
		2008	22,620
		2009	21,208

[1] The figures given in the table on court proceedings relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[2] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

[3] Excludes data for Cardiff magistrates court for April, July and August 2008.

Source:

Prepared by Justice Statistics Analytical Services within the Ministry of Justice.

Sentencing

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 16 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 668-70W, on sentencing, how many offenders had received over 200 previous convictions. [31731]

Mr Blunt: The following table shows figures for sentences given for indictable offences to offenders with 201 or more previous convictions or cautions, who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence, by offence category and offence. These figures are derived from table 6.2 of "Sentencing Statistics: England and Wales 2009" which was published on 21 October 2010. The published table gives a breakdown of offenders sentenced by number of previous convictions and cautions, and the same basis has been used for this answer.

Number of offenders with 201 or more previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and offence, 2007-09 England and Wales

	Number of offenders		
	2007	2008	2009
Violence against the person	5	19	17
Breach of antisocial behaviour order	4	19	17
Racially aggravated intentional harassment, alarm or distress	1		
Sexual offences		1	
Exposure		1	
Theft and handling stolen goods	6	8	15
Stealing from motor vehicles			1
Stealing from shops and stalls	6	8	13
Stealing not classified elsewhere			1

Number of offenders with 201 or more previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and offence, 2007-09 England and Wales

	Number of offenders		
	2007	2008	2009
Fraud and forgery	2	—	1
Dishonestly makes a false representation for gain	—	—	1
Obtaining property by deception	1	—	—
Making off without payment	1	—	—
Drug offences	—	—	4
Possession of cocaine	[illegible]	—	1
Possession of class C controlled drug	—	—	1
Possession of cannabis	—	—	2
Other indictable offences	3	1	1
Failing to surrender to bail	2	1	—
Failure to comply with notification order	—	—	1
Other indictable offences not specified above	1	—	—
Total	16	29	38

The figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system, the police national computer, which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police.

Squatting

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what definition of squatting his Department uses. [30816]

Mr Blunt: For the purposes of our ongoing work, we have been looking at the harm caused by squatters who occupy residential and non-residential property without authority.

Welsh Language

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice when his Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses these can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31169]

Mr Blunt: The Ministry of Justice published its Welsh Language Scheme on the 24 March 2010. The scheme can be downloaded in Welsh and English from

http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/moj-welsh-language-scheme.htm

This scheme focuses on the Ministry of Justice's corporate functions.

HM Court Service and the Tribunal Service have their own schemes as do a number of other organisations sponsored by the Ministry of Justice. The National Offender Management Service is currently developing their own scheme. HM Court Service revised and updated their 2007 scheme which was republished in August 2010. The scheme can be downloaded in Welsh and English from:

http://www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/cms/files/Cynllun_diwygiedig_wedi_ei_gymeradwyo_Awst_2010.pdf

Witnesses

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what plans he has for funding for witness care units in each year of the Spending Review period. [31069]

Mr Blunt: The Government are currently reviewing spend on services to victims and witnesses. Witness Care Units are jointly funded by the local police authorities and the Crown Prosecution Service. No decisions have yet been taken on additional central government funding for witness care units.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 21 December 2010

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Balkans: EU External Relations

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of progress on the EU Stabilisation and Association process in relation to *(a)* Serbia, *(b)* Montenegro, *(c)* Albania and *(d)* Bosnia and Herzegovina. [31336]

Mr Lidington: The EU Foreign Affairs Council on 14 June 2010 agreed that member states should proceed with ratification of Serbia's Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). UK parliamentary ratification is under way, alongside those of other EU member states. The EU General Affairs Council on 22 October 2010 agreed to refer to the Commission, for an Opinion, Serbia's application for EU membership, recalling that full co-operation with International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) remains an essential condition for Serbia's EU membership. The Commission's November 2010 Report on Enlargement welcomed progress made by Serbia in complying with its obligations under the SAA, but called for further effort in a number of key reform areas. The UK supports the Commission assessment.

Montenegro's SAA entered into force on 1 May 2010. In November 2010 the Commission issued an Opinion on Montenegro's application for EU membership. The Commission assessed Montenegro's track record in implementing its obligations under the SAA as positive overall. It recommended that the Council grant Montenegro EU Candidate Status, but set out seven key reform priorities which it recommended be addressed before the Council considers opening accession negotiations with Montenegro. The UK supports the Commission's assessment and its recommendation to grant EU Candidate Status to Montenegro, which will be considered by the December European Council.

Albania's SAA entered into force on 1 April 2009. In November 2010 the Commission issued an Opinion on Albania's application for EU membership. The Commission assessed Albania's track record in implementing its obligations under the SAA as positive overall. But it set out 12 key reform priorities which it recommended be addressed before the Council considers opening of accession negotiations with Albania. The UK supports the Commission assessment.

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)'s SAA was signed in June 2008 and to date has been ratified by 25 member states. The Commission's November 2010 Report on Enlargement assessed that BiH had made only limited progress in meeting its obligations under the SAA. BiH remains in breach of its Interim Agreement with the EU and the EU General Affairs Council of 14 December 2010 concluded that BiH needs urgently to align itself with its SAA obligations and speed up reforms essential for further progress towards EU membership.

Brazil: Exports

Mr Frank Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his objectives are for increasing exports to Brazil; and what foreign policy measures his Department plans to take to increase Britain's commercial interest in that country. [31457]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The UK Government are prioritising their engagement with the world's emerging powers, including Brazil. Strengthening ties with Brazil will help to promote a range of UK interests, in particular trade and investment, where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is working with UK Trade and Investment and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to build Britain's prosperity by increasing exports and investment, opening markets, ensuring access to resources, and promoting sustainable global growth.

The last three years have seen a 500% increase in the number of British companies looking for help with the Brazilian market from UKTI. There are particular opportunities in the infrastructure, energy and defence sectors, as well as commercial opportunities linked to Brazil's hosting of the 2014 football World Cup and 2016 Olympics.

The Government are playing a leading role to capitalise on these prospects. The Business Secretary visited Brazil in September 2010. In 2011 the Deputy Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the Lord Mayor of London will also visit. This high-level engagement will include business delegations. During 2011, we will develop a UK-Brazil CEOs' Forum and work to deliver concrete outcomes to the annual Ministerial UK-Brazil Joint Economic Trade Committee (JETCO).

The UK Government are also working with Brazil through the EU in support of an ambitious EU-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement, which will benefit UK companies exporting to the region. In the G20, Brazil is a helpful partner in discussions on global economic governance, by supporting free trade and resisting protectionism.

Burma: Political Prisoners

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Burmese Government on the release of political prisoners in jail or under house arrest in Burma. [31333]

Mr Jeremy Browne: We remain deeply concerned about the continued imprisonment of over 2,200 political prisoners in Burma. Their immediate and unconditional release remains one of the international community's long-standing demands. My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister and I raised the plight of Burmese political prisoners at the October Asia Europe summit at which the Burmese Foreign Minister was present. We also raise the issue directly with the Burmese Government through our ambassador in Rangoon, with regional countries with influence and in the UN's human rights bodies. Most recently we secured a strongly-worded human rights resolution on Burma in the UN General Assembly which demanded the release of all political prisoners. We will continue to maintain international pressure for progress.

Commonwealth

Mr David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Written Ministerial Statement of 9 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 41-3WS, on the UK's relationship with the Commonwealth, which states he has identified for potential *(a)* expanded membership and *(b)* partner and observer agreements; what progress has been made on developing the terms of such partner and observer agreements; and what discussions he has had to this end with his foreign counterparts. [32227]

Mr Bellingham: The Eminent Persons Group (EPG), established at Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2009 to review the work of the Commonwealth, is considering a wide range of issues including membership issues. Their recommendations will be considered at the 2011 CHOGM in Perth, Australia. Decisions relating to Commonwealth membership must be agreed by all heads. The British Government continue to work closely with the Commonwealth Secretariat and all member states on a wide range of issues.

Mr David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will assess the merits of a two-tier Commonwealth system for the purpose of allowing *(a)* multilateral trade agreements between (i) the UK, (ii) Canada, (iii) Australia, (iv) New Zealand, (v) South Africa, (vi) India and (vii) members of the Anglophone Commonwealth and *(b)* free trade agreements between the tiers. [32357]

Mr Bellingham: The UK, as part of its membership of the European Union, is party with all other 27 member states in a customs union with common arrangements for imports from and exports to third counties. These common arrangements are decided, discussed, agreed and administered through the Community's 'Common Commercial Policy' (CCP). The UK is therefore unable to enter into direct regional trade agreements with other members of the Commonwealth in exclusion of the EU.

The Government are pursuing an ambitious free trade agenda aimed at reducing barriers to trade and is committed to achieving an ambitious, pro-development outcome from the Doha Development Agenda. The UK is also working through the EU to pursue ambitious bilateral agreements with Canada and India, which we hope will conclude in 2011. The EU's trade relations with South Africa are governed by the EU South Africa Trade, Development and Co-operation agreement.

The Government are committed to helping the Commonwealth realise its potential. Trade and investment is an area where we would like to see greater impact. The Eminent Persons Group (EPG) is currently undertaking a review of the organisation to examine how it can best serve the needs of its citizens in the 21st century. Commonwealth Trade and Investment will feature in their deliberations. The EPG will publish their findings in March 2011.

Commonwealth Security Council

Mr David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will assess the merits of establishing a Commonwealth security council to include *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Canada, *(c)* Australia, *(d)* New Zealand, *(e)* South Africa, *(f)* India and *(g)* other members of the Anglophone Commonwealth. [32352]

Mr Bellingham: The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) exists to uphold Commonwealth core values as set out in the Harare Declaration (1991) and to take action when a member state is deemed to have violated those values. CMAG is formed of nine member states, appointed at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) for a two year term. The UK was last a member between 2007 and 2009. We hope that the review of CMAG, agreed to by heads at CHOGM 2009, and the work of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG), will strengthen this important group. It needs to have a more constructive approach when dealing with member states that infringe Commonwealth core values.

Departmental Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's annual budget for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30031]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not hold this information in the format requested. As budgets in the FCO are devolved to over 250 posts overseas and individual directorates and strategic programmes within the UK, this information could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

However, all expenditure undertaken by the FCO is directly aimed at achieving our foreign policy priorities and is designed to ensure the Department achieves value for money and is incurred in accordance with the principles of Managing Public Money and the HM Treasury handbook on Regularity and Propriety.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31184]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has not produced an estimate of how the change in the standard rate of value added tax (VAT) will affect the FCO's annual expenditure and such an estimate could be produced only at a disproportionate cost.

Departmental spending review settlements are set on a tax-inclusive basis, including the increase to the standard rate of VAT.

However, much of the FCO's budget is spent overseas and is therefore not liable to UK VAT. In addition, where FCO spend is with suppliers who are registered for UK VAT, this is reclaimed, wherever possible, in line with HM Revenue and Customs rules.

Departmental Sponsorship

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what expenditure *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies incurred on sponsorship in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [27516]

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and its non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) do not hold data centrally on specific instances of sponsorship where fees are paid for the right to be associated with an activity. The FCO and its NDPBs work to deliver the Government's Foreign Policy Priorities through over 250 posts worldwide through our strategic programmes and other operations. To ascertain the expenditure incurred since 1997 deemed as sponsorship would involve disproportionate cost.

Any expenditure is incurred in accordance with the principles of Managing Public Money and the Treasury handbook on Regularity and Propriety.

EU Enlargement

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of progress of on the EU accession negotiations of *(a)* Iceland, *(b)* Croatia and *(c)* the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. [31337]

Mr Lidington: Accession negotiations opened formally with Iceland on 27 July 2010. The Commission is currently working on screening reports for each of the 35 chapters. These will assess how closely Iceland is aligned with the EU acquis and will form the basis of negotiations. The first of these reports will be published early in 2011.

Croatia has made good overall progress towards meeting the membership criteria. Accession negotiations have reached their final stage and preparations for the drafting of the Accession treaty have progressed steadily. Croatia has opened all of the substantive chapters of the negotiations, and has provisionally closed 25 chapters. But Croatia still has work to do, particularly on judicial reform, public administration reform, tackling corruption and organised crime. Full co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) is a requirement for the closure of negotiations.

The European Commission has recommended, in its 2009 and 2010 enlargement strategies, that negotiations for accession to the European Union should be opened with Macedonia. The Government support this and expect a date for the opening of negotiations to be given once the European Council reaches a unanimous decision to endorse the Commission recommendation. The Council confirmed on 14 December that it is ready to return to the matter during the next presidency.

Haiti: Elections

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the violence in Haiti following the recent presidential elections in that country. [31597]

Mr Jeremy Browne: The violence that followed the first round of voting in the Haitian presidential and parliamentary elections was deeply regrettable. It hindered humanitarian work and further undermined the democratic process which is important to Haiti's stability, recovery and development. We understand the concerns of Haitian voters about the possibility of fraud and urge the political leaders and authorities to use legal constitutional means to resolve their differences.

Hungary: Council of Ministers

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his Hungarian counterpart on the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of Ministers. [32088]

Mr Lidington: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary held a bilateral meeting with the Hungarian Foreign Minister, Janos Martonyi, on 7 December 2010 in London. They discussed the key issues for the Hungarian presidency, including the financial framework, enlargement and economic governance. The UK shares priorities with the Hungarians in a number of areas, including working towards Croatian accession and on generating economic growth. The Foreign Secretary also emphasised the need to maintain momentum during the Hungarian presidency on Iran, Pakistan and Burma.

North Korea

Mr Frank Roy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his *(a)* EU and *(b)* UN counterparts on (i) North Korea's nuclear programme and (ii) the recent conflict in the Korean Peninsula. [31460]

Mr Jeremy Browne: We have held extensive discussions with both EU and UN counterparts since 23 November on North Korea's nuclear programme and the recent conflict in the Korean Peninsula. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has spoken to the UN Secretary-General, as well as to President Lee Myung-bak of the Republic of Korea. Our ambassador in Pyongyang, together with a visiting EU delegation, also made urgent representations to the North Korean Government immediately following the attack.

Palestinians: Economic Situation

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on levels of *(a)* financial and *(b)* security support provided to the West Bank by the government of Israel; and if he will make a statement. [31709]

Mr Duncan: I have been asked to reply.

The Government of Israel do not provide financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA) or to projects which benefit Palestinians in the west bank. They do, however, transfer to the PA custom clearance revenues which they collect on behalf of the PA. According to the Government of Israel's report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting of 21 September 2010, it transferred 2,299 million New Israeli Shekels (NIS) in the first half of 2010. The Government of Israel also adopt a number of policies which result in financial benefit to Israeli settlements in the west bank.

The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) is deployed across the West Bank in Area C (where Israel retains full security control) and Area B (which is under joint Palestinian and Israeli control). Area A is controlled by the Palestinian Security Forces (PSF). We assess that security in the west bank has benefited from improved cooperation between the PSF and IDF, although Israeli movement and access restrictions continue to act as a constraint on Palestinian economic growth.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on financial contributions from Israel to the Palestinian Authority; and if he will make a statement. [31710]

Mr Duncan: I have been asked to reply.

The Government of Israel do not provide financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA). They do, however, transfer to the PA customs clearance revenues which they collect on the PA's behalf. According to the Government of Israel's report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting of 21 September, it transferred 2,299 million New Israeli Shekels (NIS) in the first half of 2010.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the outcomes of international donor conferences on funding for the West Bank; and if he will make a statement. [31711]

Mr Duncan: I have been asked to reply.

The Government are not aware of any recent international donor conferences on providing funding for the west bank. An international donor conference for the Palestinian Territories was last held in Paris in December 2007. At this conference delegations from 87 countries and international organisations pledged $7.4 billion over three years to support Palestinian institution building and economic recovery, and for humanitarian assistance.

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what economic assistance his Department *(a)* has provided in the last five years and *(b)* plans to provide to the Palestinian authorities in Gaza; and if he will make a statement. [31719]

Mr Duncan: I have been asked to reply.

The UK does not provide any support, either directly or indirectly, to the de facto authorities in Gaza, as under European Union and British legislation it is illegal to provide financial assistance to Hamas. We provide budget support to the Palestinian Authority, via a World Bank Trust Fund, in order to support basic services and pay the salaries of public sector workers in both Gaza and the west bank. From 2006-08, the UK provided funding to pay public sector worker salaries through two European Union programmes known as the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) and PEGASE. As this funding is for the whole of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, it is not possible to disaggregate funding specific to Gaza. The following table lays out total UK funding for these programmes.

Calendar year	*Programme*	*Amount (£ million)*
2010	World Bank Trust Fund	30
2009	World Bank Trust Fund	30
2008	World Bank Trust Fund	35
	PEGASE	15.45
2007	TIM	3
2006	TIM	11.875

South Korea: Military Exercises

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of South Korea's recent long-fire military drills; and if he will make a statement on the security situation on the Korean peninsula. [31593]

Mr Jeremy Browne: We recognise that South Korea has a right to conduct such defensive exercises. However tensions are likely to remain high until North Korea abandons its provocative behaviour and violations of UN resolutions, and creates the conditions for the resumption of talks by making verifiable progress towards denuclearisation.

USA

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether a communiqué was issued following his meeting with the United States Secretary of State in November 2010. [32269]

Alistair Burt: No.

WALES

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many staff employed by her Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31213]

Mr David Jones: Nil.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Departmental Lobbying

Robert Halfon: To ask the Attorney-General (1) how much the Law Officers' Departments' agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent from the public purse on influencing public policy through *(a)* employing external (i) public affairs companies, (ii) strategic consultancies and (iii) corporate communications firms, *(b)* external marketing and *(c)* other activities in each of the last 10 years; [23770]

(2) which of the Law Officers' Departments' non-departmental public bodies have undertaken activities to influence public policy for which they engaged *(a)* public affairs and *(b)* public relations consultants in each year since 1997; and at what monetary cost in each such year. [23793]

The Solicitor-General: The Law Officers' Departments include two bodies that fall within the ambit of the question—the National Fraud Authority and the Treasury Solicitor's Department. Neither has incurred any such expenditure since 1997.

INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENTARY STANDARDS AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Communication

Bob Russell: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority with which media organisations *(a)* the Director of Communications, *(b)* staff in the communications section and *(c)* other staff in the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority communicated in the two weeks prior to the publication on 2 December 2010 of information on hon. Members' expenses. [29687]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Interim Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking with which media organisations (a) the Director of Communications, (b) staff in the communications section and (c) other staff in the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority communicated in the two weeks prior to the publication on 2 December 2010 of information on hon. Members' expenses. (29687)

IPSA's policy is that any media enquiries are dealt with by the communications team. In the course of their work, staff in IPSA's communications team regularly speak to members of media organisations. During the two weeks prior to publication, communications team members responded to telephone enquiries from a large number of journalists from both the national and regional media. We do not keep records of calls received.

Offices: Rents

John Mann: To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, how much the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority spent on each type of office rental in the latest period for which figures are available. [29497]

Mr Charles Walker: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. I have asked IPSA to reply.

Letter from Andrew McDonald:

As Chief Executive of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking how much the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority spent on each type of office rental in the latest period for which figures are available.

The MPs' Expense Scheme provides for two limits on constituency office rental costs: one for constituency offices in the London Area as defined by the Scheme, and one for constituency offices outside the London Area.

Taking both bands together, the lowest monthly office rental payment paid by IPSA since May 2010 was for £102.30 and the highest was for £1,117.50 per month.

Not all rental contracts are directly comparable. Some will solely cover the right to occupy the premises. Others will encompass ancillary services such as cleaning or may include provision for energy costs. Care should therefore be taken when making comparisons, and the highest figure quoted here includes cleaning and energy costs.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

Conferences

Robert Halfon: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what the annual budget of the Government Equalities Office for conferences was at *(a)* 7 May 2010 and *(b)* 7 December 2010. [30022]

Lynne Featherstone: The Government Equalities Office does not hold a set budget for conference expenditure. Since its creation, the following amounts have been spent in this budget area:

Conference expenditure

Financial year	£
2007-08[1]	220,167
2008-09	305,275
2009-10	414,423
2010-11	87,166

[1] GEO was established in October 2007.

Most of this expenditure was for events held in preparations for new legislation, which culminated in the 2010 Equality Act. Another large element was for events which sought to improve the diversity of representation in public life.

Departmental Publications

Robert Halfon: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what estimate she has made of the expenditure of the Government Equalities Office on printing *(a)* Command Papers, *(b)* papers laid before Parliament by Act, *(c)* consultation documents and *(d)* other papers in each year since its inception. [28371]

Lynne Featherstone: No such estimate has been made. Expenditure on publications and printing since the Government Equalities Office was established are as follows:

	£	£
Financial year	*Printing*	*Publications*
2007-08[1]	12,375	17,610
2008-09	22,841	199,429
2009-10	175,057	68,406
2010-11[2]	11,849	36,098

[1] From 12 October 2007.

[2] Current to 30 November 2010

Discrimination

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities when she expects to make an announcement on the report commissioned by the Government Equalities Office on Caste Discrimination and Harassment in Great Britain. [32157]

Lynne Featherstone: The Government have recently published the National Institute for Economic and Social Research report on caste prejudice and discrimination in Great Britain.

The Government are considering the report carefully and will announce their conclusions in due course.

Equal Pay

Esther McVey: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what recent assessment the Government Equalities Office has made of the gender pay gap. [31489]

Lynne Featherstone: The Government Equalities Office (GEO) does not make its own assessment of the gender pay gap, but instead uses figures published by The

Office for National Statistics (ONS). The most recent assessment by ONS shows that the gap between the median hourly earnings of men and women working full-time is 10.2% in 2010. If men and women working part-time are also included then this figure rises to 19.8%.

This Government are committed to tackling the barriers that women face in the workplace and are taking a range of measures including extending the right to request flexible working to all employees, consulting on a new system of parental leave, and promoting gender equality on company boards including responding to any recommendations from the current Lord Davies review that are targeted towards, and accepted by, the Government.

Equalities Bill

Priti Patel: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities how much was spent under each budgetary heading on the eight regional road shows during the Equalities Bill consultation; and how many staff of the Government Equalities Office *(a)* attended and *(b)* were otherwise involved in work relating to the road shows. [23229]

Lynne Featherstone: The Government Equalities Office (GEO) spent £80,108 on eight regional road shows. Four of the events were about the equality duty and were held in September 2009. The other four events were consultations on the Equality Bill, held towards the end of 2008 and early 2009. The expenditure covered project and event management (event organisation and advertising) £41,549 and event and location hosting (venue hire) £38,559.

GEO has not kept a register of who attended these events. Numbers of GEO staff at the events varied but typically GEO sent two policy staff to capture delegate's view and introduce the subject matter and a member of the GEO's communications team. Organisation of these events was undertaken by the GEO communications team which at the time had four members of staff but these staff would have been involved intermittently on work relating to the road shows.

Local Enterprise Partnerships: Females

Esther McVey: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what discussions she has had with ministerial colleagues on the representation of women on the boards of local enterprise partnerships; and if she will make a statement. [32308]

Lynne Featherstone: I have had no discussions with ministerial colleagues on this issue. My ministerial colleagues in the Departments for Communities and Local Government and Business Innovation and Skills are taking forward the development of local enterprise partnerships.

Both Departments are represented on the Inter Ministerial Group for Equalities which I Chair and together with other ministerial colleagues have been instrumental in shaping the Government's recently published Equality Strategy.

The Strategy recognises that inclusive and diverse boards are better boards and that it is essential that we benefit from the talents of everyone in society. The Government have appointed Lord Davies to undertake a review into the lack of female representation on corporate and business boards which will report back early next year.

The Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), is meeting you in the new year to discuss this issue.

Government Equalities Office: Personnel

Priti Patel: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what plans she has for the number of staff of the Government Equalities Office in each of the next five years. [24200]

Lynne Featherstone: Between financial year 2010-11 and the end of the spending review period in 2014-15 we expect to see Government Equalities Office (GEO) staff numbers fall from 120 to just below 100. How the numbers will change in particular years cannot be forecast precisely as it will depend on some factors outside GEO's control such as individual's career choices.

Politics: Females

Simon Kirby: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what her policy is on measures to increase the number of women in political life. [31674]

Lynne Featherstone: This Government recognises that increasing the number of women in politics has a real and constructive effect on the quality of decision making and is committed to tackling the barriers preventing women and under-represented groups from participating in political life.

The Equality Act 2010 includes a range of positive action provisions that allow political parties to take steps to encourage involvement amongst women and other underrepresented groups. These include extending the period that they can use women-only shortlists until 2030. The general positive action provisions will also enable political parties to create dedicated committees or groups, exclusively for women and broader shadowing, internship and mentoring opportunities for women.

Section 106 of the Equality Act 2010 also makes it possible to require registered political parties to publish anonymised data relating to the diversity of their candidate selections at a particular election and we are currently considering how this will be taken forward.

The Deputy Prime Minister is chairing a cross-party Committee, which is discussing proposals for a wholly or mainly elected second chamber. The Committee is considering how a reformed second chamber could more closely reflect the diversity of the society it serves.

Schools: Females

Esther McVey: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what steps the Government Equalities Office is taking to increase the number of female role models in *(a)* schools, *(b)* businesses and *(c)* public services. [31756]

Lynne Featherstone: The Gender Equality Duty, which came into force in England, Scotland and Wales in April 2007, requires public authorities to promote equality of opportunity between men and women and eliminate unlawful harassment and sex discrimination. This could include work to promote the number of female role models in schools and public services.

In regard to role models in schools, this Government are committed to encouraging girls and young women to make broader career choices and to open up opportunities for everyone, regardless of background and gender. It is important to recognise the part role models play in raising aspirations and helping young people to make informed choices.

We will be establishing a new all-age careers service to encourage informed choices, providing clear and transparent information to all learners about the options open to them. Good careers guidance is at the heart of ensuring opportunities are available to all.

The Government have also worked with Smallpeice Trust, an independent charity providing exciting programmes to promote engineering careers to the young. Girls, who are underrepresented in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers, are particularly targeted.

In regard to role models in businesses, the Government have appointed Lord Davies to look at how obstacles can be removed to allow more women to make it to the boardroom. Lord Davies will deliver his recommendations for an effective business-led strategy in February 2010 and we will respond to his recommendations in due course. Measures that we are taking on positive action, on flexible working, and on parental leave will also help address some of the barriers to career progression that women face in the workplace.

In regard to role models in public services, the Government have set themselves the aspiration that by the end of the Parliament at least 50% of all appointees being made to the boards of public bodies will be women. We are currently looking at what steps need to be taken to achieve that aim and will be publishing a cross-Government action plan in March 2011.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Conflict Prevention: Finance

Dr Poulter: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the likely effect of the commitment that just under a third of his Department's budget will be spent on conflict prevention by 2015 on his Department's *(a)* Millennium Development Goals priorities and *(b)* other priorities; and if he will make a statement. [32335]

Mr Duncan: Aid invested in fragile and conflict affected states will make a crucial contribution to progress against the range of the Government's Development priorities. No fragile country has yet achieved a single Millennium Development Goal (MDG). Half of children who die before their fifth birthday are in fragile states, as are half of the children who are not in primary school.

We will not meet the MDGs or meet the needs of the poorest unless we do more to deal with conflict and fragility directly. This means addressing the root causes of conflict and fragility; supporting an inclusive political system which builds a closer society; and strengthening government's ability to deliver basic services, security, justice and economic opportunity. This is vital to improving the lives of the poorest.

Departmental Press Releases

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development on how many occasions his Department has provided embargoed media briefings prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010; in respect of how many such briefings his Department was informed that the embargo had been breached; what steps were taken as a result of each such breach; and on how many occasions his Department has provided media briefings without an embargo prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010. [31924]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) has on no occasion provided an embargoed media briefing prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010.

Departmental Written Questions

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many and what proportion of questions tabled to the Secretary of State for written answer on a named day were answered substantively before or on the day named for answer *(a)* in Session 2009-10 and *(b)* since May 2010; how many such questions tabled between May 2010 and 12 November 2010 had not received a substantive answer by 18 November 2010; and what estimate he has made of the average cost to his Department of answering a question for written answer on a named day on the day named for answer in the latest period for which figures are available. [25941]

Mr Duncan: The Government have committed to providing the Procedure Committee with sessional statistics in a standard format on the time taken to respond to written parliamentary questions (PQs) for the 2009-10 Session. This information will be submitted to the Procedure Committee shortly.

Between 18 May 2010 and 18 November 2010 the Department for International Development (DFID) received 136 named day PQs, of which 129 were answered substantively on the day named for answer. All named day PQs tabled between 18 May 2010 and 12 November 2010 had received substantive answers by 18 November 2010.

DFID has not made an estimate of the average cost to the Department of answering a named day PQ on the day named for answer. Her Majesty's Treasury estimates the average cost of answering a written question to be £154.

During the current parliamentary session, DFID has answered 95% of all named day PQ substantively on the day named for answer. Efforts are in place to achieve 100%.

Developing Countries: Climate Change

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much of the funding allocated to the Pilot Programme for Climate Resistance is to be provided in the form of *(a)* loans and *(b)* grants. [32336]

Mr O'Brien: As of 30 September 2010, the total finance pledged to the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience from all donors, which includes the UK, USA, Germany, Canada, Denmark, Australia, Norway and Japan, is $972 million (£626 million). Of this sum, $638 million (£411 million) is in the form of grant finance and $334 million (£215 million) is in the form of concessional loans.

Developing Countries: Insurance

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans there are to use funds from the Fast Start Fund to increase access to micro-insurance in developing countries. [32050]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) is looking at what works in setting up micro-insurance schemes in developing countries. This will address issues such as: how to get insurance companies engaged; how to make insurance affordable for poorer farmers; and, how to maximise value for money from such schemes. We are working with international partners, including the World Bank, the World Food programme and Oxfam, to help find answers to these questions, and to improve climate risk management for the poor. Some of the preliminary results of our analysis will be available in early 2011 and will inform our approach to micro-insurance and climate change, and our "Fast Start" funding decisions.

Developing Countries: Maternity Services

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether his plans for improving maternal health in developing countries include the provision of technical and financial support in respect of user fees. [32347]

Mr O'Brien: Improving maternal health and women's rights are major priorities for the UK Government. The Department for International Development (DFID) will shortly be launching a new Framework for Results for Reproductive, Maternal and Newborn Health. This will set out how the UK aims to increase efforts to 2015 to save the lives of at least 50,000 women in pregnancy and childbirth, a quarter of a million newborn babies and enable 10 million couples to access modern methods of family planning. It includes action to remove financial barriers that prevent women accessing services.

The Government believe that nobody should die or suffer ill health because they are too poor to afford treatment. This is why we support international efforts to achieve universal coverage of basic health services. Evidence shows that removing financial barriers increases poor women's uptake of reproductive, maternal and newborn health services. Where appropriate, DFID will provide technical and financial support to countries that wish to remove fees at the point of use of services and replace them with more equitable health financing systems. This includes making essential health services free at the point of use, and supporting the poorest women to meet the indirect costs of health care by piloting innovative approaches like cash transfer programmes.

Developing Countries: Medical Treatments

Dr Poulter: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether his Department has allocated funding to promote the use of tranexamic acid in reducing death in patients with significant haemorrhage; and whether he plans to take steps to enable tranexamic acid to be included in the World Health Organisation Essential Medicines pack. [32329]

Mr O'Brien: The UK Government do not make specific allocations for the use of particular medicines in developing countries.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) makes recommendations on the selection of medicines for a variety of purposes based on a thorough assessment of evidence of comparative effectiveness. It is important that these processes are based on objective review and not on the interventions of member states.

Developing Countries: Young People

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of his Department's ring-fenced budget for conflict-affected and fragile states will be allocated to supporting children and young people. [32337]

Mr Duncan: The Government are committed to taking action to reduce the direct impact of war and violence on children, and to tackle the indirect effects of conflict—the toll on their health, education and chance of a decent life. Over half of children who are not in primary school and half of those who die before their fifth birthday are in fragile countries.

The 30% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) allocated to fragile and conflict affected states will be spent across the range of development activities. Allocations to Department for International Development (DFID) bilateral programmes, including for fragile states, are being determined by the Bilateral Aid Review, through which DFID country offices have been asked to set out the results they will achieve during the next four years in a range of areas, including support to children and young people such as health, education, and skills training and employment. The outcomes of the Bilateral Aid Review will be available in the spring.

Food: Textiles

Alison McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether he has made an assessment of the potential contribution to his Department's development objectives which could be achieved by increasing the proportion of ethically-sourced goods in Government procurement as part of the current review of Government buying standards for food and textiles; and if he will make a statement. [31477]

Mr Duncan: The Department for International Development (DFID) has not made such an assessment. DFID conducts its formal procurement procedures within the best practise confines of the UK public sector procurement regulations and in line with European legislation. When procuring products and services we consider suppliers policies on corporate social responsibility.

sustainability, transparency and environmental protection. For example DFID and its agents aim to purchase timber and timber products that originated from sustainable and legal sources; and to procure consultancy services that ensure environmental implications are identified, and actions taken to address potentially adverse impacts and enhance environmental benefits.

International Assistance

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what new commitments the UK made at the Millennium Development Goals summit in September 2010 relating to reductions in the level of worldwide poverty by 2015. [32387]

Mr O'Brien: The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) summit was a crucial opportunity to secure concrete commitments to accelerate progress on the MDGs as the world approaches the deadline of 2015. The summit resulted in a global commitment to save 16 million women and children, reverse the spread of malaria and tackle hunger and under-nutrition.

The summit also ended with the formal adoption of the outcome document "Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals". This document offers us a path towards meeting the MDGs, giving a lifeline to millions of the world's poorest people.

Kenya: Agriculture

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much the Government has spent on climate change adaptation for smallholder farmers in Kenya in each of the last five years; and what proportion that amount represents of his Department's *(a)* total spending on climate change overseas, *(b)* total spending on climate change adaptation overseas, *(c)* total spending on climate change in the developing world and *(d)* total spending on climate change adaptation in the developing world in each such year. [32007]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: Our central recording systems do not capture this level of detail for project expenditure. Compiling the requested information would incur disproportionate cost.

The Department for International Development (DFID) recognises that smallholder farmers are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and we take this into account in the design and implementation of a number of our development activities, including through our research programme and our adaptation programmes. In 2009 the Stockholm Environment Institute produced a study on the economic impacts of climate change in Kenya, including in the agriculture sector. This work is informing our approach to the design of programmes of support to climate adaptation in Kenya.

The UK Government have committed to provide £1.5 billion in Fast Start finance over the period 2010-12, to help the developing world carry out the urgent work needed to adapt to climate change, adopt clean technology and reduce emissions from deforestation. In 2010-11 the UK is providing approximately 41% of its Fast Start allocation for adaptation, a significant share of which has been designed to benefit smallholder farmers. The Department is in the course of monitoring and evaluating the impact of these ongoing programmes.

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on agricultural development in Kenya in each of the last five years. [32011]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) has not directly supported agricultural development in Kenya over the last five years, for reasons of effective division of labour among donors.

DFID does centrally fund agricultural development in sub-Saharan Africa, some of which benefits Kenya. Such multi-country support includes £7 million to the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and £37.5 million to the African Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF), some of which relates to agricultural development.

Kenya: Food Aid

Mr Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on emergency food aid in Kenya in each of the last five years. [32013]

Mr Andrew Mitchell: The Department for International Development (DFID) provided £5 million in April 2008 and a further £5.5 million in March 2009 to the World Food Programme for emergency food aid in Kenya. This support contributed to the international response to severe drought and accompanying rise in food insecurity. We have not provided other funds for emergency food aid in the last five years.

North East England

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which Ministers in his Department have visited the North East since their appointment; and what the *(a)* date and *(b)* purpose was of each such visit. [31792]

Mr Duncan: No Department for International Development (DFID) Ministers have visited the North East since May 2010.

Private Sector

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) when he plans to publish the outcomes of his Department's consultation on private sector development; and if he will make a statement; [31797]

(2) when he plans to publish the results of his Department's consultation on private labour markets; and if he will make a statement. [31798]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) has no plans to publish the results of these consultations. The purpose of the consultations is to obtain the views of a broad range of stakeholders on the development of DFID's research programme in these areas.

Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the cost to his Department of the consultancy fees incurred in establishing its Private Sector Department. [31799]

Mr O'Brien: There were no consultancy fees incurred in establishing the Private Sector Department. The design and implementation of the changes for the new Department were carried out by Department for International Development (DFID) staff.

Western Sahara: Food

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 447W, on Western Sahara: food, whether any of the support for Western Sahara provided through the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office is allocated to Saharawi in Western Sahara rather than the refugee camps in Algeria. [32219]

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not have a bilateral aid programme in Western Sahara and has not provided direct emergency funds to the country in the last five years. We support Western Sahara through our share of the budget of the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). ECHO'S funding currently goes to the Saharawi refugee camps in Algeria. ECHO has provided €165 million in humanitarian aid since it was established and allocated €10 million in October 2010.

TREASURY

Deficit Reduction: Deprived Communities

21. **Derek Twigg:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the effects of his deficit reduction policies on deprived communities. [31836]

Mr Gauke: It is for Departments to decide how to best prioritise resources within their departmental expenditure limits. The impact on communities will only become apparent once these decisions have been made. For the first time at spending review, Treasury undertook and published an indicative distributional analysis of public services spend. The estimates show that those in most need will continue to receive the most support from the state in absolute terms.

Financial Institutions: Remuneration

Mrs Hodgson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his Department plans to bring forward proposals to require banks and other financial institutions to publish details of employees earning more than £1 million per year. [31814]

Mr Hoban: The FSA has published its revised Remuneration Code and Disclosure Rules, which incorporates provisions in the EU capital requirements directive (CRD3). These requirements are at the forefront of global practice, and include robust rules on remuneration disclosure.

Banks: Pay

Mr Umunna: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what steps his Department has taken to hold a consultation on the remuneration disclosure scheme announced in the June 2010 Budget; [26327]

(2) by what mechanisms his Department's consultation on the remuneration disclosure scheme announced in the June 2010 Budget will be undertaken; what timetable he has set for publication of the outcome of that consultation; and if he will make a statement. [26329]

Mr Hoban *[holding answer 25 November 2010]*: A consultation document was issued by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) on 10 November 2010 outlining proposals to implement the remuneration disclosure provisions in the revised EU capital requirements directive (CRD3). The FSA intends to have this disclosure regime in place by 1 January 2011 and relevant firms will be required make disclosures in respect of the 2010 financial year. The Government support the principles set out in Sir David Walker's recommendations on disclosure of remuneration. We will continue to work towards an internationally agreed approach at both G20 and EU levels.

Credit Rating Agencies: EU Action

Mr Clappison: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the likely effect of implementation of the European Commission's proposal to amend the EU Regulation on Credit Rating Agencies on UK national competence on this matter; and if he will make a statement. [11360]

Mr Hoban: The proposed regulation implements the June 2009 European Council decision to move supervision of credit ratings agencies (CRA) from national authorities to the EU level.

The regulation is directly applicable to UK law, although some minor implementation is required of member states. The regulation:

introduces a harmonised approach to the regulation of credit rating activities in the European Union;

creates a registration system for CRAs established in the EU, and a certification system for agencies established outside the EU;

requires registered agencies to comply with various provisions relating to independence, conflicts of interest, employees and analysts, methodologies and models, outsourcing, and disclosure and presentation of information; and

requires specified financial institutions to use credit ratings for regulatory purposes only if they have been issued or endorsed by a registered CRA, or issued by an overseas agency that has been certified in accordance with the regulation.

Demonstrations: City of Westminster

Mr Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what damage was caused to the HM Revenue and Customs building at 100 Parliament street during the demonstration on 9 December 2010; what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of repairing the damage; and if he will make a statement. [31649]

Mr Gauke: HM Revenue and Custom's (HMRC) office at 100 Parliament street is occupied under a private finance initiative with Exchequer Partnership and is occupied under the terms of the contract with Exchequer Partnership rather than by the terms of a traditional lease. Damage was caused to building fabric: windows, doors and stonework of HMRC's building at 100 Parliament street during the demonstration on 9 December 2010.

The cost of the damage is still being finalised and will be submitted within insurance provisions as part of the Exchequer Partnership arrangement. Until the claim has been assessed by the insurers HMRC cannot quantify the cost to the public purse.

Mr Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to protect the buildings leased by his Department from damage during demonstrations; and if he will make a statement. [31650]

Mr Gauke: Internal physical security of HMT buildings is managed by the relevant security contractor for the individual building. External security is the responsibility of the police and the local authority.

During demonstrations, the Department maintains full liaison with police through the security contractor to assist in identifying and protecting areas at risk including during demonstrations. Protocols are activated with the PFI supplier/security contractor to protect entrances and increase manual guarding in any building identified as at risk.

Excise Duties: Fuels

Mr MacNeil: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made on negotiations with the European Commission on the proposed rural fuel duty rebate; and if he will make a statement to the House on the issue before 20 January 2011. [31302]

Mr Gauke *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: Officials are undertaking discussions with the European Commission prior to submitting a formal application to the Commission for a fuel duty rebate. it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings and discussions.

The Government will report back to Parliament prior to submitting a formal application.

Gift Aid

Tony Baldry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what steps he plans to take in response to the recent conclusions of the Gift Aid Forum; [28650]

(2) what proposals his Department has to reduce the administrative burden in respect of the Gift Aid scheme. [28624]

Mr Gauke: Representatives from the charity sector have been working with officials on HM Treasury's Gift Aid Forum to consider a number of options for reform and simplification of Gift Aid. A report was submitted on behalf of the forum on 13 October and has now been published on HM Treasury's website along with the Economic Secretary's letter to Peter Fanning, the author of the report. There is much in the report that can be taken forward and HM Revenue and Customs will be setting up a Charity Tax Forum to progress some of the recommendations.

Jim Shannon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to raise the level of public awareness of the Gift Aid scheme in respect of online donations. [30564]

Mr Gauke: On 3 December HM Treasury issued its response to Peter Fanning's report on behalf of the Give Aid Forum, which can be found online at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/8519.htm

The report made recommendations to simplify the administration of Gift Aid and to raise awareness. As set out in the response, the Government will take forward a number of recommendations, including looking into raising awareness of the Gift Aid scheme among donors and among young people.

HM Revenue and Customs: Overpayments

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress his Department has made in *(a)* repaying overpaid tax and *(b)* collecting underpaid tax as a result of recent miscalculations of tax liability made by HM Revenue and Customs in the PAYE System. [31701]

Mr Gauke: This information is not available. However, by 15 December 2010 HMRC had completed 72% of its forecast volume of end of year reconciliations for the years 2008-09 and 2009-10. HMRC plans to have completed 90% by the end of December.

Income Tax

John Stevenson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has plans to merge income tax and national insurance as a means of tax simplification. [32120]

Mr Gauke: The Government aim for a tax system which is more competitive, simpler, greener and fairer, and keeps the system under continual review with a view to meeting these objectives. While national insurance shares some of the characteristics of income tax, it is a system of social insurance which determines entitlement to state pensions and other benefits. Therefore the two cannot easily be merged.

Independent Financial Advisers: Qualifications

Jason McCartney: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether independent financial advisers will be able to opt out of markets for which they would otherwise be required to acquire a new qualification to practise from January 2013. [31936]

Mr Hoban: The Financial Services Authority's Retail Distribution Review will apply to all advisers in the retail investment market. Independent financial advisers will not require a new qualification to offer basic advice on stakeholder products such as pensions, as well as advice on savings, mortgages and insurance products that do not have an investment element.

Jason McCartney: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether exemptions will be made available to independent financial advisers of long standing from new qualifications that will be required for them to continue to practise from January 2013. [31937]

Mr Hoban: The Financial Services Authority's (FSA) Retail Distribution Review (RDR) will apply to all retail investment advisers including independent financial advisers, wealth managers, stockbrokers and banks. The FSA will recognise some higher qualifications that some long standing professional advisers have attained. It will publish further details of the future qualifications framework in January 2011.

Jason McCartney: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which qualifications held by independent financial advisers (IFAs) of long standing he expects will not meet the new examination benchmark for IFAs from January 2013. [31938]

Mr Hoban: The Financial Services Authority is responsible for developing the professionalism rules for the Retail Distribution Review and intends to publish a list of qualifications that will meet the required benchmark in January 2011.

Inheritance Tax

John Stevenson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has for the reform of inheritance tax. [30815]

Mr Gauke: The Budget in June 2010 confirmed that the inheritance tax threshold will be frozen at £325,000 until 2014-15. As set out in the coalition agreement, the Government have decided that making changes to the personal allowances for income tax should take priority over other tax cuts including cuts to inheritance tax. Any changes to the inheritance tax regime will then have to be considered with due regard to the Government's priorities of reducing the fiscal deficit and ensuring economic recovery. Any decision would be made through the usual Budget process.

Mortgages: Regulation

Simon Kirby: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has received recent representations from mortgage providers on new regulations proposed by the Financial Services Authority; and if he will make a statement. [32263]

Mr Hoban: The Government are committed to a healthy housing and mortgage market.

The Financial Services Authority (FSA) is conducting a wholesale review of mortgage regulation in the UK, the 'Mortgage Market Review'.

The Government believe that it is right for the FSA to ensure that the UK mortgage market has responsible lending practices. We will continue to work with the FSA, mortgage lenders and intermediaries, and consumer groups to ensure a mortgage market that is sustainable for all participants.

The FSA published the 'Mortgage Market Review: Responsible Lending' in July. This paper forms one part of an ongoing consultation process.

The FSA has stated that they will fully assess the potential impact on the market before implementing any rule changes.

Treasury Ministers and officials have discussions with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such discussions.

Non-domestic Rates: Retail Trade

David Morris: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue would be lost to the Exchequer if retail units in England and Wales with a rateable value of less than *(a)* £5,000, *(b)* £10,000 and *(c)* £15,000 were exempted from business rates. [31517]

Robert Neill: I have been asked to reply.

No estimates of the revenue lost if retail units in England and Wales were exempted from business rates have been made. This information is not currently held in the form requested.

David Morris: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many retail units with a rateable value of less than *(a)* £5,000, *(b)* £10,000 and *(c)* £15,000 there are in England and Wales. [31518]

Mr Gauke: The Valuation Office Agency identifies the various types of property contained in the rating lists by the use of a specialist (SCAT) code. These data are consistent with the statistical release titled: "Non-domestic rateable values: 2005 and 2010 Local Ratings Lists-England and Wales", published on 28 October 2010. A copy of the statistical release is available at the following link:

http://www.voa.gov.uk/publications/statistical_releases/October-2010/NDR-RV-2005-And-2010-Local-Rating-Lists-England-And-Wales.html

Properties with a 'Retail' SCAT code of 021, 024, 088, 097, 098, 106, 139, 15 154, 155, 210, 235, 243, 249, 251, 417, 425, 429, 442, 504, 507, 508

	Number hereditaments		
Rateable value	*England*	*Wales*	*Tot*
Less than 5,000	141,360	12,450	153,8
Less than 10,000	275,510	19,510	295,02
Less than 15,000	337,030	22,290	359,32

Private Finance Initiative

John Stevenson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the private finance initiative. [32121]

Danny Alexander: At the spending review, the Government abolished the PFI credits system which provided Departments with a ring-fenced budget that could be used only to support local authority PFI projects. This change levels the playing field between PFI and other forms of procurement.

The most recent survey of the performance of operational PFI projects was commissioned by HM Treasury in 2008. This was conducted by Ipsos MORI.

Public Expenditure

Jonathan Edwards: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which unit of his Department is responsible for calculations on the implementation of the Barnett formula. [31271]

Danny Alexander: The Devolved Countries Unit in the Treasury is responsible for calculations on implementation of the Barnett formula.

Public Expenditure: Harlow

Robert Halfon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the total spending from the public purse in Harlow constituency in each year since 2000. [32290]

Danny Alexander: The Government do not hold information about total public funding allocated within parliamentary constituency boundaries. Public funding from central Government revenue grants allocated to Harlow district council for the years 2000-01 to 2009-10 is set out in the following table:

	£000
2000-01	7,485
2001-02	7,958
2002-03	8,130
2003-04	8,497
2004-05	8,206
2005-06	9,407
2006-07	10,286
2007-08	10,211
2008-09	10,857
2009-10	10,813

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government, Revenue Outturn (RO) returns.

The lowest level at which total public expenditure information is available is the region. Total identifiable expenditure on services in the east of England can be found in Chapter 9 of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis 2010 (Cm 7890).

Public Sector: Borrowing

Simon Kirby: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had with the Governor of the Bank of England on the relationship between changes in market interest rates and levels of Government borrowing. [31833]

Danny Alexander: The Chancellor has frequent discussions with the Governor of the Bank of England on a wide range of issues including prospects for the UK economy.

Fiscal policy is a competence of HM Treasury while the independent Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England has operational responsibility for monetary policy.

Public Sector: Pay

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has made an assessment of the effects on *(a)* men and *(b)* women of his proposals to freeze pay in the public sector. [8103]

Danny Alexander: The Emergency Budget announced a two year pay freeze from 2011-12 for public sector workforces, except for those earning £21,000 or less, who will receive an increase of at least £250 a year. This policy will help protect jobs and the quality of public services.

The Government have assessed the impact of the pay freeze on men and women using Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data.

The precise impact on individuals earning £21,000 or less will be determined by the relevant employer. However, compared with the previous Government's policy of a 1% pay cap for 2011-12 and 2012-13, it is likely that the emergency Budget policy will represent less income for public sector workers earning over £21,000 but an increase in income for those earning £21,000 or less.

It is estimated that 65% of those employed by the public sector are female. However, 78% of those employed in the public sector earning £21,000 or less are female and will therefore benefit from the Government's policy.

In addition, the £3.3 billion in savings from public sector pay restraint will help protect public sector jobs. Given that 65% of public sector employees are female around two thirds of jobs protected will be those of women. Pay restraint will also protect the provision of public services that are used by both women and men.

Taxation: Multinational Companies

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had with European Commission representatives on amendments to the directive on the taxation of cross-border interests and royalty payments between associated companies. [31759]

Mr Gauke: The European Commission recently conducted a public consultation on extending the directive on the taxation of cross-border interest and royalty payments between associated companies. Treasury officials participated in discussions with representatives of the European Commission on this directive prior to the consultation. Treasury Ministers are engaged in dialogue with European Commissioners on a variety of issues, including tax.

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of whether existing double taxation treaties have a disproportionate effect and compliance cost on *(a)* the self-employed and *(b)* small businesses based in the UK which are earning income from the exploitation of their intellectual property rights overseas. [31760]

Mr Gauke: Double taxation agreements (DTA) benefit UK businesses by reducing the level of tax they have to pay to foreign governments when doing business overseas or receiving income from overseas. The requirements imposed by foreign governments to enable businesses to claim relief are a matter for them. The UK aims to ensure that the requirements imposed by foreign governments are kept to the minimum required to ensure adequate compliance with the terms of the DTA. Where necessary the UK will make representations to the foreign government regarding their requirements.

Walker Review

Mr Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has issued guidance to *(a)* Ofwat and *(b)* the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the effect of Exchequer rules on levy-funded subsidies on the proposals of the Walker Review in respect of charging and metering for water and sewerage services. [31403]

Danny Alexander: We have not provided explicit guidance for DEFRA or Ofwat on the Walker Review's proposals in respect of charging and metering for water and sewerage services. However, the Treasury has provided DEFRA and Ofwat with "A quick guide to Levy-funded subsidies—Tax and Spend". This guide is intended as a brief outline of some of the issues that need to be considered with regard to levy-funded subsidies and the list of issues and questions it mentions is not exhaustive.

I am placing a copy of "A quick guide to Levy-funded subsidies—Tax and Spend" in the House Library.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Leader of the House how much his Office spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28149]

Sir George Young: The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons joined the Cabinet Office in 2007.

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to him by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, my right hon. Friend the Member for Horsham (Mr Maude), on 20 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 1058W.

JUSTICE

Appeals

Mr Slaughter: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many appeal cases relating to (1) bereavement benefit have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and (c) without legal representation were upheld; [29563]

(2) carer's allowance have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29564]

(3) child support have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29565]

(4) discrimination on grounds of religion or belief have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29566]

(5) discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29567]

(6) age discrimination have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29568]

(7) managed migration have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29569]

(8) asylum have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29570]

(9) entry clearance have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29571]

(10) family visit visas have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29572]

(11) child benefit lone parent allowances have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29573]

(12) tax credits have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29574]

(13) the Compensation Recovery Unit have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29575]

(14) *(a)* housing and *(b)* council tax have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals (i) with legal representation, (ii) with legal representation funded by legal aid and (iii) without legal representation were upheld; [29576]

(15) *(a)* pensions credit, *(b)* health in pregnancy grant, *(c)* incapacity benefit, *(d)* employment support allowance and *(e)* disability working allowance have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals (i) with legal representation, (ii) with legal representation funded by legal aid and (iii) without legal representation were upheld; [29577]

(16) income support have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29578]

(17) industrial death benefit have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29579]

(18) attendance and disability living allowances have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29580]

(19) vaccine damage have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29581]

(20) the Social Fund have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29582]

(21) severe disablement benefits and allowances have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29583]

(22) retirement pension have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29584]

(23) maternity benefits and allowances have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29585]

(24) jobseeker's allowance have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29586]

(25) industrial injuries disablement benefit have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld; [29587]

(26) home responsibilities protection have been heard in each of the last three years; and how many such appeals *(a)* with legal representation, *(b)* with legal representation funded by legal aid and *(c)* without legal representation were upheld. [29632]

Mr Djanogly: The following table provides a breakdown, by subject matter requested:

The number of appeal cases heard;

The number of cases with legal representation that were successful; and

The number of cases without legal representation that were successful.

It is not possible to provide information on the number of cases that were funded through legal aid as that level of detail is not recorded. It should also be noted that there are some gaps in information in the table. I will write to the hon. Member with the outstanding information once it is available.

Annex A

	Total number of appeal cases heard i.e. were determined at hearing (oral or paper)			*Number of appeal cases with representation where appeal successful*			*Number of appeals without representation where the appeal was successful*		
	2007-08	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
236 Bereavement benefit	308	397	375	21	31	14	24	19	16
237 Carer's allowance	1,130	693	762	99	58	49	112	61	54
238 Child support[2]	3,098	3,230	3,163	285	262	275	1,158	1,217	1,080
239 Discrimination on grounds of religion and belief									
240 Discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation									
241 Age discrimination									
242 Managed migration	19,740	18,805	32,158	395	593	908			
243 Asylum	12,943	10,358	15,873	4,491	4,391	6,442			
244 Entry clearance	57,056	73,256	71,779	195	240	458			
245 Family visit visas	55,831	55,844	60,287	51	34	93			
246 Child benefit lone parent allowances	836	914	1,066	38	41	38	86	80	80
247 Tax credit[3]	513	691	867	24	38	44	32	64	90
248 Compensation Recovery Unit	278	223	225	77	59	53	85	46	48
249(a)[4] Housing	3,212	2,900	3,773	500	456	464	463	381	466
249(b) Council tax	832	759	893	67	63	51	141	115	113
250(a) Pensions credit	1,000	884	985	206	160	137	148	98	92
250(b) Health in pregnancy grant	0	0	232	0	0	2	0	0	10
250(c) Incapacity benefit	57,310	62,928	47,201	16,888	17,942	13,453	12,439	13,714	10,624
250(d) Employment support allowance	0	27	50,791	0	0	9,504	0	1	9,476
250(e) Disability working allowance	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
251 Income support	12,830	12,167	11,794	2,536	2,257	1,921	1,900	1,713	1,509
252 Industrial death benefit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
253 Attendance and disability living allowances	61,182	56,662	54,560	19,324	16,887	15,122	8,291	7,208	7,256
254 Vaccine damage	10	7	3	1	0	1	1	0	0
255 Social Fund[5]	2,309	2,803	3,350	126	167	147	193	216	267

Annex A

	Total number of appeal cases heard i.e were determined at hearing (oral or paper)			*Number of appeal cases with representation where appeal successful*[1]			*Number of appeals without representation where the appeal was successful*		
	2007-08	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-1*
256 Severe disablement benefit and allowances	107	85	99	34	21	25	13	17	20
257 Retirement pension	450	415	608	23	20	12	28	22	24
258 Maternity benefits and allowances	58	96	149	1	3	9	3	7	14
259 Jobseeker's allowance	7,511	9,246	17,534	545	610	796	1,547	1,669	2,324
260 Industrial injuries disablement benefit	6,046	5,266	4,870	1,201	928	828	1,214	1,056	1,03
261 Home responsibilities protection	13	11	14	0	1	0	2	0	0

[1] TS Immigration and Asylum cases, noted "publicly funded".

[2] Includes assessments, departure referrals, departures and reforms.

[3] Includes child, disabled persons and working family and working tax credits.

[4] Assumed to mean housing benefit.

[5] Includes funeral and maternity figures.

Appeals: Debts

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many appeal cases relating to mis-calculation of debts have been heard *(a)* in Coventry, *(b)* in the West Midlands and *(c)* nationally in each of the last five years; and how many such appeals (i) with and (ii) without legal aid were upheld. [31508]

Mr Djanogly: The question has been interpreted as relating to the overpayment of social security benefits. The following table shows the number of overpayment of benefit cases cleared at hearing for Coventry, West Midlands and nationally together with the number of hearing outcomes found in favour of the appellant. The information is only available from 2007-08 onwards.

Overpayment of benefit

	Coventry		*West Midlands*		*National*	
	Cleared at hearing	*Decision in favour of appellant*	*Cleared at hearing*	*Decision in favour of appellant*	*Cleared at hearing*	*Decision in favour of appellant*
2007-08	124	41	838	199	8,912	3,030
2008-09	88	32	688	188	7,632	2,638
2009-10	94	28	638	163	8,170	2,550

Information on the number of appeals heard with or without legal aid is not collected or reported on by the tribunal.

At present in welfare benefit cases legal aid is only available for advice and assistance, not for legal representation. The appellant is required only to provide reasons for disagreeing with the decision in plain language. For those who need assistance on a welfare benefits matter, there is advice and assistance available from the voluntary sector as well as, for example, the benefits inquiry line.

Appeals: Disability Living Allowance

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many upheld appeal cases relating to disability living allowance that were a result of *(a)* administrative and *(b)* procedural errors made by (i) government departments and (ii) local authorities there have been in each month of 2010 (A) in the West Midlands and (B) nationally. [31511]

Mr Djanogly: The first-tier tribunal—social security and child support does not hold the information requested as there is no business need or benefit to do so. The information can be provided only at a disproportionate cost by manually checking each individual case file. In addition, the first-tier tribunal (social security and child support) destroys appeal files six months after the conclusion of a case, so, for the majority of the period requested by the hon. Member, information is no longer available.

Barry Magistrates Court

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice if he will publish the data his Department took into account when taking the decision to close Barry magistrates court. [32145]

Mr Djanogly: The data relating to court utilisation rates and the estimated travel impact of closures is contained in annexes B and C respectively of the consultation response papers. Data concerning the financial and socio-economic impact of closures can be found in the impact assessments and analysis and research into the effect on different communities and groups of people is in the equality impact assessments.

I would also emphasise that decisions were made following consideration of the many responses to consultation that were received and which are detailed throughout the response papers.

Coroners

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many *(a)* open and *(b)* suicide verdicts were returned in each coroners' jurisdiction in England and Wales in each year from 2000 to the latest date for which figures are available. [31892]

Mr Djanogly: A table showing the number of verdicts of suicide, and the number of open verdicts, reported by each coroner's district for each of the years 2000 to 2009 inclusive, has been placed in the Library of the House.

Information relating to the year 2010 is not yet available, but will be published in the 2010 edition of the annual statistical bulletin "Deaths reported to coroners, England and Wales", which will be published on the Ministry of Justice website in May 2011.

Demonstrations: City of Westminster

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what damage was caused to Supreme Court buildings during the demonstration held on 9 December 2010; what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of making good the damage; and if he will make a statement. [31654]

Mr Djanogly: During disturbances in Parliament square and Broad Sanctuary in the afternoon and evening of Thursday 9 December, the Supreme Court had panes of glass in 14 ground floor windows broken, including the destruction of original 97-year-old leaded lights. All the windows have secondary glazing and none was penetrated, albeit that one pane of the secondary glazing was damaged and has had to be replaced.

Paint was sprayed on the main entrance doors, which were bolted shut against the protestors; and on the Portland stone walls of the court to the south of the main entrance.

Paint was also sprayed on the semi-circular stone seating in Parliament Square in front of the main entrance but the seating is the responsibility of Westminster city council and the council cleaned off the paint.

The costs for the repairs carried out to date amount to £7,375. This does not include the cost of the restorer's repair of the leaded lights for which the provisional cost is £9,000, nor the cost of painting the window putty beads when the putty has hardened.

Some protestors also climbed over the railings around the court's perimeter to rip down pigeon netting across window reveals and to jump on the grilles over the building's "moat". Presently it is not clear whether these will have to be replaced.

Departmental Contracts

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what steps he is taking to encourage small businesses to bid for contracts let by his Department; and what recent guidance he has provided to small businesses on bidding for such contracts. [32071]

Mr Blunt: The Cabinet Office recently announced a package of measures designed to help government meet its aspiration that 25% of Government contracts go to small and medium sized enterprises. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is working closely with the Cabinet Office to ensure that these measures are embedded in its procurement practices.

The MoJ also acts proactively to engage and attract the interest of the voluntary community and social enterprise sector (VCSE). Opportunities are currently advertised through "Supply to Government" and will shortly migrate to the new contracts finder portal where all Government opportunities over £10,000 will be published. Opportunities are also advertised through Clinks, a charity that assists in communication to the sector.

Procurement activity is tailored to the value and complexity of the requirement but tends to be shorter and involve engagement opportunities with the sector via dialogue sessions to discuss the requirement. MoJ has recently implemented an e-procurement tool that is easy for small businesses and the VCSE to use. The MoJ procurement processes comply with the Cabinet Office VCSE Compact.

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what recent discussions he has had with voluntary and community groups on bidding for contracts let by his Department. [32022]

Mr Blunt: The Ministry of Justice has regular meetings with representatives from the voluntary and community sector to discuss matters of interest including accessing contracts.

The Legal Services Commission meets regularly with representatives of the voluntary sector including Advice UK, Advice Service Alliance (ASA), Citizens Advice (Cit A), Housing Law Practitioners' Association (HLPA) and the Law Centres Federation. The Civil Contract Consultative Group, which also includes ASA, meets quarterly to share information and discuss overarching issues about contracts and tendering. Separate category specific meetings for social welfare law and immigration are held to resolve practical issues.

We have a standing Advisory Group for the voluntary sector which covers all matters related to the sector's contribution to reducing reoffending including contracts. In developing proposals to open up the market to independent providers to bid for offender management services, the Ministry of Justice and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) Agency held a market engagement workshop, prior to the publication on 7 December of our Green Paper 'Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders'. The workshop included organisations from the voluntary and community sectors, including those currently delivering our services and those interested in competing for future opportunities. The Green Paper makes clear the significant increase in opportunities for the sector to bid for contracts including as part of innovative payment by result approaches.

NOMS met with independent providers including the voluntary sector, in consultation meetings in nine locations across the country to discuss opportunities for bidding for contracts around education, training and employment under the European Social Fund Co-financing Programme. These were followed up by a number of "meet the providers" events aimed at enabling smaller organisations from the sector to access subcontracting opportunities.

The sector was, and is, widely engaged in advising NOMS on the specifications, benchmarking and costing exercise of all services required by prisons and probation. The timetable for the exercise is available on the MoJ website at:

http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/noms-sbc-programme.htm

This too offers the sector a direct input into the design of services and their future tendering.

Employment Tribunal

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many cases have been heard by an Employment Tribunal *(a)* in Coventry, *(b)* in the West Midlands and *(c)* nationally in each of the last five years; and how many such cases (i) with and (ii) without legal aid were upheld. [31510]

Mr Djanogly: It has not been possible to provide a breakdown of the number of cases specifically heard by employment tribunals in Coventry and the West Midlands. However, the following table lists the number of claims disposed of either at hearing or by way of a default judgment by employment tribunals nationally and in the Midlands group, ie Birmingham, Leicester, Nottingham and Shrewsbury in the period 2005-10.

A default judgment may be issued where the respondent has not presented a response to the employment tribunal within the relevant time limit (or the response has been entered but not accepted).

Legal aid is available for advice in respect of an employment tribunal claim (though not for advocacy before the tribunal), and for both advice and representation for appeals to the Employment Appeal Tribunal. The employment tribunals do not hold information on whether a claim has attracted legal aid.

Employment tribunals jurisdictional claims successful and unsuccessful for offices in the Midlands and Nationally 2005-10

Office	*Financial year*	*Successful at hearing claimant*	*Default judgments issued*	*Unsuccessful at hearing*	*Dismissed at preliminary hearing*	*Total disposals at hearing*
Birmingham	2005-06	1,500	140	900	160	2,700
	2006-07	2,300	130	950	230	3,600
	2007-08	2,000	39	820	270	3,100
	2008-09	1,700	29	1,200	200	3,100
	2009-10	4,100	550	2,000	240	6,900
Leicester	2005-06	1,100	420	190	38	1,700
	2006-07	490	300	280	31	1,100
	2007-08	380	730	280	40	1,400
	2008-09	350	420	270	35	1,100
	2009-10	760	750	310	25	1,800
Nottingham	2005-06	420	310	230	36	1,000
	2006-07	850	440	310	80	1,700
	2007-08	600	550	430	44	1,600
	2008-09	610	560	370	97	1,600
	2009-10	490	670	280	76	1,500
Shrewsbury	2005-06	490	95	210	72	870
	2006-07	760	49	330	120	1,300
	2007-08	590	70	200	52	910
	2008-09	930	210	320	70	1,500
	2009-10	250	110	87	14	460
Midlands	2005-06	3,500	970	1,500	310	6,300
	2006-07	4,400	920	1,900	460	7,700
	2007-08	3,500	1,400	1,700	410	7,000
	2008-09	3,600	1,200	2,200	410	7,400
	2009-10	5,600	2,100	2,700	360	10,800
National	2005-06	29,100	5,600	9,800	2,500	47,000
	2006-07	21,800	5,800	11,000	2,900	41,500
	2007-08	20,600	6,000	10,800	3,800	41,200
	2008-09	22,700	7,700	14,500	3,400	48,300
	2009-10	28,500	16,000	14,300	4,600	63,400

Notes

1. Rounding. All figures are rounded independently according to the following conventions. Values less than 100 remain as unit values; values from 100 to 999 are rounded to nearest ten; and values of 1,000 and over are rounded to the nearest hundred.

2. Claims disposed figures are calculated with reference to the office at which the claim was accepted. The Shrewsbury office was changed from a hearing and administrative centre to a hearing centre administered by Birmingham in 2009-10, therefore, the number of claims disposed attributed to Shrewsbury in 2009-10 is lower as this office no longer accepts claims.

Source

Employment Tribunal Management Information Database and Employment Tribunal Annual Reports.

Family Courts: Social Workers

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many independent social workers or equivalent self-employed experts were employed by Family courts in 2009-10. [31754]

Mr Djanogly: The information requested on the number of social workers instructed by the county courts was 311 for the Family Proceedings courts (magistrates) and 152 for the county courts for the period 2009-10.

Judiciary: Equal Opportunities

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what his policy is on measures to make the judiciary more representative of the composition of the population. [31673]

Mr Kenneth Clarke: The Government support, in principle, the recommendations delivered by the Advisory Panel on Judicial Diversity in its February 2010 report. The recommendations seek to deliver speedier and sustained progress to a more diverse judiciary at every level and in all Courts in England and Wales, without diminishing appointment on merit.

My noble Friend, Lord McNally, is a member of the Judicial Diversity Taskforce established to oversee the delivery of the Panel's recommendations. The Taskforce's other members are the Lord Chief Justice, the Senior President of Tribunals, the Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission, the Chairman of the Bar Council, the President of the Law Society and the President of the Institute of Legal Executives.

Legal Aid Scheme

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what criteria were used to determine the new matter starts available in the Civil Legal Aid Tender 2010. [31689]

Mr Djanogly: The Legal Services Commission (LSC) is the non-departmental public body with responsibility for the administration of the legal aid fund and the tender process and award of legal aid contracts are operational matters for the LSC. In this tender process the LSC aimed to commission services based more closely on where clients need them.

In social welfare law the LSC based the numbers of New Matter Starts available on its indicative needs model, which uses demographic data to show which the likely level of need for legal aid services. This was combined with information on current service provision. Where the needs model differed from current service provision, the New Matter Starts made available in that area were increased or decreased by up to 10% compared with current service provision.

In mental health, immigration and asylum and the low volume categories the LSC based the numbers of New Matter Starts available on historical data showing client location.

For all categories other than the low volume categories the LSC also produced procurement plans prior to tenders being opened setting out the services it would be procuring in each procurement area.

Legal Aid Scheme: Low Incomes

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the eligibility criteria for legal aid in providing access to justice for those with low or no incomes. [31688]

Mr Djanogly: The financial eligibility criteria for civil legal aid are intended to focus it on the most vulnerable. At present those in receipt of certain welfare benefits automatically qualify financially for civil legal aid. For all others, in the areas where means testing is required, those with a gross annual income of £31,884 are potentially eligible for legal aid, depending on the amount of their assessed disposable income and/or capital.

On 15 November the Justice Secretary announced the publication of a consultation on a package of proposals for the reform of legal aid, including proposals to reform the financial eligibility criteria. The consultation paper: 'Proposals for the Reform of Legal Aid in England and Wales' is available at the Ministry of Justice website at:

> http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/legal-aid-reform-151110.htm

Legal Aid: Contracts

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what information was contained in the letter from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in his Department of 9 August 2010 to the Law Society on provisions in the 2007 unified civil contracts for extension of those contracts beyond October 2010. [32016]

Mr Djanogly: The letter I wrote to Linda Lee, President of the Law Society, on 9 August 2010 stated that:

> "I understand that there is no further provision in the current contracts for extension beyond their expiry date in October".

Prior to September 2010 the Unified Contract contained a provision that notice of any further extension of the contract must be given at least three months' notice prior to 31 March 2010. Therefore at the time the letter of 9 August was written there was no power on the face of the contract allowing for any further extension. Following an application for judicial review of the contract tender for family legal services by the Law Society, the Legal Services Commission agreed to a one month extension to preserve the status quo and ensure continuity of provision pending the outcome of the judicial review. The mechanism to achieve this was to amend the above notice provision in the contract; this amendment was made pursuant to Clause 13.4 (minor amendments). This was not something envisaged at the time of my letter. Thereafter when judgment was given in the judicial review further amendments were made to the extension provisions of the contract to allow for it to be extended for family services only. Those were made under Clause 13.2, which allows for amendment in response to a court judgment. This approach was approved by the court at the final hearing of the judicial review.

Legal Aid: Illegal Immigrants

Stephen Phillips: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how much his Department has spent on legal aid for those who entered the UK illegally in each of the last five years. [31670]

Mr Djanogly: Legal aid in England and Wales is administered by the Legal Services Commission (LSC). For the purpose of granting legal aid, the LSC does not distinguish between those having entered the UK illegally from others seeking legal aid in immigration and asylum matters, or any other matter. Therefore, the information is not held by the LSC.

In Scotland and Northern Ireland legal aid is a devolved matter.

Legal Services Commission

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what steps the Legal Services Commission (LSC) takes to assist its staff to comply with their obligations under the LSC's Employee Charter; what procedures are in place for ensuring staff compliance with the Charter; whether any enforcement mechanisms for staff operate with regard to the Charter; on how many occasions the provisions of the Charter have been breached by the LSC; and what actions have been taken in each such case. [32008]

Mr Djanogly: The Employee Charter is not contractual and therefore the Legal Services Commission (LSC) does not enforce employee obligations under the Charter. The Charter was developed by employees who volunteered to participate in its development. The LSC has incorporated the Charter into its core behaviours which underpin the personal development reviews for all LSC employees.

If an employee felt there had been non-compliance with the Charter they would have the opportunity to have this addressed through: discussion with their line manager or union representative, LSC internal mediation, the LSC's grievance procedure and, potentially, the LSC's disciplinary procedure.

To date the LSC does not have any grievances specifically relating to Employee Charter non-compliance.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what obligations are placed on staff of the Legal Services Commission (LSC) under its Employee Charter; when the Charter was first produced; by what means it was disseminated to LSC staff; what changes have been made to the Charter since it was first produced; on what date and for what reasons such changes have been made; and what information has been produced by the LSC in connection with the Charter. [32009]

Mr Djanogly: The LSC launched its Employee Charter in conjunction with a new behavioural framework in September 2008. The Charter was developed by employees as an expression of the aspirational values of the organisation. While the Charter is not intended as a performance measurement tool, the behavioural framework describes how the LSC's competencies can be demonstrated through behaviours and is used in performance development review meetings and for recruitment.

The method of dissemination of the Charter was decided by local senior management teams and varied across the sites of the LSC. All staff had access to it through an intranet article and mention in the 'core brief' (standardised monthly face to face communication from managers). Booklets were available for distribution and each office had a 'champion' who ran information sessions in their regions. It is included in induction packs for new starters.

The Charter has not been revised since it was first produced.

The Charter is published with the behavioural framework in the booklet titled 'Empowering our Future'. It is also referenced in the Employee Handbook which contains terms and conditions of employment. Employees who demonstrate the values of the Charter have been recognised publicly with intranet stories and posters for notice boards describing how their behaviour makes a positive difference to the LSC.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice when the Department of the Legal Services Commission headed by its Chief Legal Adviser was renamed; for what reasons it was renamed; and what changes in its functions there have been since 1 April 2007. [32137]

Mr Djanogly: In May 2010, the three separate departments of Legal, Procurement and Policy were merged into one, now referred to as Legal, Commissioning and Operational Policy. The overall functions of each have remained the same, with the changes having taken place in reporting structure. The director of this department reports direct to the chief executive on legal matters and the executive director of commissioning on all other matters.

Legal Services Commission: Part-time Employment

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the Legal Services Commission's definition is of part-time employment. [31687]

Mr Djanogly: The Legal Services Commission defines part-time employment as working less than 35 hours per week. One full-time equivalent (FTE) position equates to working at least 35 hours per week.

Legal Services Commission: Working Hours

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what normal working hours are required of full-time employees of the Legal Services Commission (LSC); and what provision there is in the contracts of employment for LSC personnel to work in excess of normal working hours. [32091]

Mr Djanogly: A full-time equivalent employee at the LSC works 35 hours per week. The LSC adheres to the EU working time directive and the policy on overtime is contained within the LSC's Employee Handbook, which states

> "It is not the LSC's aim to encourage (staff) to work overtime. However, there will be occasions where operational requirements necessitate additional work to be undertaken. These will be organised by (the) manager. Overtime requirements must be requested by the Line Manager in charge."

Where overtime has been agreed, employees are entitled to overtime pay arrangements as set out in the LSC's overtime policy.

Alternatively, under the LSC's flexi time scheme employees at lower management level and below can accrue up to 14 hours of flexi credit during each accounting period (four weeks).

Legal, Commissioning and Operational Policy: Manpower

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) how much was paid in *(a)* redundancy and *(b)* severance payments to each former employee of the Legal Services Commission's Legal, Commissioning and Operational Policy department and its predecessor departments in each year since 1 April 2007; [32138]

(2) how many employees with permanent contracts in the Legal, Commissioning and Operational Policy department of the Legal Services Commission (LSC) and its predecessor departments left the LSC in each year since 1 April 2007; and what their *(a)* name, *(b)* job title and *(c)* date of departure was in each case; [32139]

(3) how many temporary staff were employed by the Legal, Commissioning and Operational Policy department of the Legal Services Commission (LSC) and its predecessor departments in each year since 1 April 2007; and what the cost of *(a)* recruitment, *(b)* national insurance and *(c)* remuneration costs were of such temporary personnel in each year. [32140]

Mr Djanogly: It is not possible to answer the question in the exact format requested. The LSC has undergone significant restructuring since April 2007. Each restructure has aimed to ensure that the LSC is better prepared for the future and that it has the right people with the right skills and experience to deliver legal aid. Various people have moved between departments and the departments themselves have been renamed and restructured. To track the staff and match them to departments is not possible except at disproportionate cost. However, I am able to provide total figures for the whole LSC as set out in the following table. Please note that the figures for the number of employees leaving the LSC include those who have left for reasons other than redundancy and so these figures should not be compared directly with the severance costs reported.

	2007-08	*2008-09*	*2009-10*	*2010-11 to date*
Number of employees leaving LSC	169	127	198	85
Severance costs (£000)	1,119	2,947	4,139	1,371
Number of temporary staff (full-time equivalent)	220	268	159	200
Cost of temporary staff (£000)	5,781	9,750	6,647	3,495

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many staff are employed on permanent contracts in the Legal, Commissioning and Operational Policy department of the Legal Services Commission. [32136]

Mr Djanogly: 89 full-time equivalents are employed in the Legal, Commissioning and Operational Policy department of the Legal Services Commission.

Maghull Prison: Serco Group PLC

Sadiq Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) what costs his Department has incurred as a result of the cancellation of the contract with Serco Group plc to build Maghull Prison; [32220]

(2) what estimate his Department made of the construction costs for Maghull Prison at the commencement of the project; [32221]

(3) what estimate he has made of the level of savings which will accrue to his Department as a result of cancelling the contract to build Maghull Prison; [32222]

(4) how much his Department has spent on the development of plans to build a new prison in Maghull. [32223]

Mr Blunt: As financial close had yet to be reached on the contract to design, construct, manage and finance the proposed prison at Maghull, no contract cancellation charges are due.

The cost of the contract for the proposed prison was £567 million, to be paid over a 26½ year period. The construction costs, which were included in the total contract cost, were estimated at around £95 million.

A total of £16 million has been spent on the site since it was purchased in 1998. This includes site purchase costs, site security, obtaining planning consent and detailed planning permission, discharging the planning conditions and demolishing the buildings that were on site.

Not proceeding with the project will save a total of £567 million in running costs. We are now likely to save around £14 million to £16 million more over the Spending Review Period than if we had decided to continue. This saving would have continued beyond this period at around £7 million to £9 million per year once the proposed prison had become operational.

The cost of external professional advice (including legal, financial, insurance and technical advisors, as well as Partnerships UK), for the procurement of prisons at Maghull and Belmarsh West was about £2.4 million. As the tendering process for both prisons was run simultaneously, a breakdown of the cost of external professional advice for Maghull alone is not available.

Magistrates Courts

Mr Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what his most recent estimate is of the maintenance costs required for the upkeep of the 18 magistrates and local courts in Wales listed in the court closures consultation paper. [31982]

Mr Djanogly: The most recent estimate, as at July 2010, of the total backlog maintenance for the 18 courts in Wales that were proposed for closure is £1,151,000.

Following the decisions announced on 14 December, HMCS will continue to undertake any essential maintenance work required until the courts which are to close have been formally closed and the buildings disposed of.

Moorland Prison

Karl Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many *(a)* prison officers and *(b)* prisoners were injured during the incident at Moorlands prison in November 2010. [31988]

Mr Blunt: During the course of the disturbances at HMPYOI Moorland between 2 and 4 November *(a)* no members of staff were injured and *(b)* seven prisoners were injured.

North East England

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice which Ministers in his Department have visited the North East since their appointment; and what the *(a)* date and *(b)* purpose was of each such visit. [31789]

Mr Kenneth Clarke: The Prisons Minister, my hon. Friend the Member for Reigate (Mr Blunt), visited

Durham Probation and HMP Frankland on 27 and 28 May 2010 as part of a series of visits to prisons and probation areas.

Prisoners' Release

Gavin Shuker: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what criteria he plans to use to determine the release of prisoners serving indeterminate sentences who have completed their minimum tariff. [32358]

Mr Blunt: On 7 December we published proposals in the Green Paper, "Breaking the Cycle: effective punishment, rehabilitation and sentencing of offenders", for public consultation. These proposals included the reform of sentences of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPPs).

We intend that, as now, offenders who have completed their minimum term will undergo a risk assessment before being considered for release, and the Parole Board will consider whether each individual case is suitable for release on licence. We are, however, proposing to make amendments to the risk test used by the Parole Board, so that before continuing detention the Parole Board will need to satisfy themselves that the offender presents a risk which cannot be managed in the community. These proposals have been published on the Ministry of Justice website at:

www.justice.gov.uk

Prisoners: Sentencing

Gavin Shuker: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many people were serving a custodial sentence of *(a)* five years or fewer, *(b)* four years or fewer, *(c)* three years or fewer, *(d)* two years or fewer and *(e)* one year or less for each category of offence in the latest period for which figures are available. [32361]

Mr Blunt: The following table provides information on custodial sentences in prison establishments in England and Wales by sentence length band and offence category as at 30 September 2010.

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Custodial prison population as of 30 September 2010 by sentence length and offence category

	Sentence length				
Offence category	*Less than five years*	*Less than four years*	*Less than three years*	*Less than two years*	*Less than one year*
Violence against the person	7,033	5,991	4,846	3,535	1,761
Sexual offences	2,315	1,753	1,232	720	212
Robbery	3,513	2,486	1,500	619	143
Burglary	5,053	4,188	2,954	1,526	507
Theft and handling	3,719	3,517	3,207	2,768	2,047
Fraud and forgery	1,225	1,066	903	698	324
Drug offences	5,866	4,370	2,677	1,085	229
Motoring offences	877	857	823	759	547
Other offences	4,851	4,383	3,849	3,234	2,234
Offences not recorded	190	159	128	107	92

Prisons

Sadiq Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what costs his Department has incurred as a result of the cancellation of the prison building programme. [32224]

Mr Blunt: Costs of about £25.1 million have been incurred as a result of the decisions not to proceed with the projects at Runwell, Glen Parva and Maghull.

However, the prison building programme has not been cancelled and new prisons at Belmarsh West and Featherstone two are expected to be delivered by the end of April 2012.

Prisons: Rehabilitation

Mr David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how much his Department spent on drug rehabilitation in prisons in 2010; and how much he plans to spend on such purposes in 2011. [32351]

Mr Blunt: In the financial year 2010-11 the Ministry of Justice allocated a total of £71.4 million for drug and alcohol treatment services in prisons and young offender institutions across England and Wales. In addition to this Department of Health fund clinical services in prison primarily through the integrated drug treatment system.

The recent spending review confirmed that health services will now be responsible for funding and commissioning drug and alcohol treatment in all prisons in England. Ministry of Justice will work closely with Department of Health to drive efficiencies in drug and alcohol treatment in prisons and the community in order to achieve better results for those in contact with the criminal justice system. The recently published "Cross-Government Drugs Strategy and the Ministry of Justice green paper Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders" sets out some of our proposals for achieving this.

Rape: Victim Support Schemes

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what funding his Department allocated to the provision of support in the criminal justice system for victims of rape in each year since 2005; and what such funding he plans to provide in each year of the spending review period. [32042]

Mr Blunt: Since 2005 the following amounts have been allocated by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform (which was subsumed under the Ministry of Justice in June 2010) to fund support for victims of sexual violence:

> Over financial years 2004-05 and 2005-06 a total of £4 million from recovered proceeds of crime was allocated to improving support services for victims of sexual crime. This was split between improving both statutory (developing and extending the network of SARCs) and voluntary-sector provision for victims of sexual crime.
>
> Since 2006-07 £1.25 million has been allocated annually through the Victims' Fund towards the continued development of voluntary-sector support services. Since 2007-08 this has been funded through the victim surcharge, a £15 levy on all fines imposed in the criminal courts. In 2010-11 £1.25 million of surcharge revenue was combined with a £1 million contribution from the Government Equalities Office to form a single fund of £2.25 million for the sexual violence voluntary sector.

The Government are committed to improving support for victims of rape by providing long-term, stable funding to existing rape crisis centres and establishing ne[illegible]tres where there are gaps in provision. An announcement on how we will implement the commitment will be made in the new year.

Reparation By Offenders

Hazel Blears: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many third sector organisations were supported by community payback schemes in 2009-10. [32251]

Mr Blunt: The National Offender Management Service does not routinely collect information in relation to organisations supported by Community Payback. A survey of Community Payback was conducted in March 2010. During that month in excess of 200,000 hours of work were provided for voluntary sector organisations, with 1,543 work projects being operated which benefited the voluntary sector.

Hazel Blears: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many offenders completed community payback orders in 2009-10. [32253]

Mr Blunt: A total of 67,692 offenders successfully completed Community Payback sentences in 2009-10.

Hazel Blears: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what the average group size was of community payback work groups in 2009-10. [32254]

Mr Blunt: The size of Community Payback work groups was not collected for the period requested. The NOMS Specification and Benchmarking programme suggested an average group size of seven offenders—though this will vary depending on the nature of the work.

Sentencing

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice pursuant to the answer of 16 November 2010, *Official Report*, columns 668-70W, on sentencing, how many offences there were in each category by *(a)* gender and *(b)* ethnicity. [31730]

Mr Blunt: Tables 1 to 5 show figures for sentences given for indictable offences to offenders with 16 or more previous convictions or cautions, who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence, by category of offence and gender. Tables 6 to 10 show figures for sentences given for indictable offences to offenders with 16 or more previous convictions or cautions, who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence, by category of offence and ethnicity. These figures are derived from table 6.2 of 'Sentencing Statistics: England and Wales 2009' which was published on 21 October 2010.

The figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system, the police national computer (PNC), which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police. The ethnicity information recorded on the PNC reflects the police officer's view of the offender's ethnicity.

Table 1. Number of offenders with 16 to 25 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and gender, 2007-09

England and Wales

	Number of offenders					
	2007		*2008*		*2009*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Violence against the person	2,036	157	2,046	224	2,216	255
Sexual offences	62		84	1	62	1
Burglary	1,645	56	1,630	59	1,503	54
Robbery	44	8	63	11	60	12
Theft and handling stolen goods	10,040	2,047	11,326	2,384	11,590	2,450
Fraud and forgery	575	100	583	98	600	119
Criminal damage	649	50	584	31	563	31
Drug offences	3,673	289	4,405	346	4,900	360
Indictable motoring offences	122	3	117		116	4
Other indictable offences	3,368	359	3,153	358	2,877	330
Total	22,214	3,069	23,991	3,512	24,487	3,616

Table 2: Number of offenders with 26 to 50 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and gender, 2007-09

England and Wale

Number of offenders

	2007		*2008*		*2009*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Femal*
Violence against the person	1,094	102	1,131	110	1,243	120
Sexual offences	28	2	24	2	27	
Burglary	997	31	1,124	29	1,086	30
Robbery	11	5	25	5	14	2
Theft and handling stolen goods	8,359	1,282	10,019	1,640	11,080	1,896
Fraud and forgery	276	47	307	48	301	55
Criminal damage	263	11	268	15	275	18
Drug offences	1,781	105	2,253	149	2,672	161
Indictable motoring offences	46	1	47	—	32	1
Other indictable offences	1,736	189	1,802	182	1,745	155
Total	14,591	1,775	17,000	2,180	18,475	2,438

Table 3: Number of offenders with 51 to 75 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and gender, 2007-09

England and Wale

Number of offenders

	2007		*2008*		*2009*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Femal*
Violence against the person	138	13	169	17	215	36
Sexual offences	3	—	4	—	3	
Burglary	53	3	59	2	68	4
Robbery	—	—	—	1	—	
Theft and handling stolen goods	990	105	1,273	182	1,702	201
Fraud and forgery	23	3	28	9	26	5
Criminal damage	19	3	26	2	22	
Drug offences	81	9	122	9	178	21
Indictable motoring offences	1	—	2	1	1	
Other indictable offences	136	25	167	18	160	18
Total	1,444	161	1,850	241	2,375	285

Table 4: Number of offenders with 76 to 100 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and gender, 2007-09

England and Wale

Number of offenders

	2007		*2008*		*2009*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Femal*
Violence against the person	70	6	66	15	83	11
Sexual offences	1	—	—	—	—	
Burglary	2	—	11	—	11	1
Robbery	—	—	—	—	—	
Theft and handling stolen goods	174	26	235	38	251	29
Fraud and forgery	1	1	5	2	9	1
Criminal damage	2	—	9	—	1	
Drug offences	3	2	17	3	14	5
Indictable motoring offences	—	—	—			
Other indictable offences	39	7	39	5	34	5
Total	292	42	382	63	403	52

Table 5: Number of offenders with 101 or more previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and gender, 2007-09

England and Wale

Number of offenders

	2007		*2008*		*2009*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Femal*
Violence against the person	42	9	65	20	68	25
Sexual offences	—	—	—	—	1	
Burglary	—	—	4	1	1	

Table 5: Number of offenders with 101 or more previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and gender, 2007-09

England and Wales

	Number of offenders					
	2007		*2008*		*2009*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Robbery						
Theft and handling stolen goods	120	19	166	37	217	24
Fraud and forgery	3	2	2	2	1	1
Criminal damage	4			1		
Drug offences	3	2	3	3	5	4
Indictable motoring offences						
Other indictable offences	27	12	28	7	27	11
Total	199	44	269	71	320	65

Note:
These figures do not include those with an unknown gender.

Table 6: Number of offenders with 16 to 25 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and ethnicity, 2007-09

England and Wales

	Number of offenders														
	2007					*2008*					*2009*				
	White	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*
Violence against the person	1,983	163	33	3	11	2,043	158	45	7	17	2,218	193	46	3	11
Sexual offences	58	4	—	—	—	77	7			1	59	3	1		
Burglary	1,587	86	18	2	8	1,570	97	14	3	5	1,438	85	25	2	7
Robbery	40	9	1	—	2	56	14	3		1	64	7	1		
Theft and handling stolen goods	11,005	736	247	35	66	12,568	758	279	27	78	12,858	765	327	33	59
Fraud and forgery	596	49	20	2	8	605	46	24	2	4	639	45	28	2	5
Criminal damage	659	29	4	—	7	592	15	2	2	4	563	22	4		5
Drug offences	3,355	419	144	23	21	4,053	496	170	14	18	4,388	616	218	19	19
Indictable motoring offences	107	12	3	—	3	107	6	3		1	106	9	4		1
Other indictable offences	3,371	256	72	12	18	3,194	219	75	2	22	2,875	249	61	4	18
Total	22,761	1,763	542	77	144	24,865	1,816	615	57	151	25,208	1,994	715	63	125

Table 7: Number of offenders with 26 to 50 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and ethnicity, 2007-09

England and Wales

	Number of offenders														
	2007					*2008*					*2009*				
	White	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*
Violence against the person	1,088	86	14	1	7	1,134	82	17	2	6	1,238	97	16	6	6
Sexual offences	28	1	—	1	—	23	1	1		1	24	1		1	1
Burglary	973	46	3	1	5	1,077	64	9	—	3	1,036	58	14	3	5
Robbery	11	5	—	—	—	23	5	2			14	2			
Theft and handling stolen goods	8,862	623	98	19	39	10,809	666	109	33	42	11,987	746	151	36	56
Fraud and forgery	303	15	5	—	—	324	23	6	1	1	326	23	6		1

Table 7: Number of offenders with 26 to 50 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and ethnicity, 2007-09

England and Wales

	Number of offenders														
	2007					*2008*					*2009*				
	White	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*
Criminal damage	254	14	3		3	274	3	2		4	281	6	2	2	2
Drug offences	1,691	159	27	3	7	2,141	200	36	6	19	2,501	263	52	9	8
Indictable motoring offences	42	4	1			43	3	1			31	2			
Other indictable offences	1,752	138	20	2	13	1,835	116	23	2	8	1,771	102	16	5	6
Total	15,004	1,091	171	27	74	17,683	1,163	206	44	84	19,209	1,300	257	62	85

Table 8: Number of offenders with 51 to 75 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and ethnicity, 2007-09

England and Wales

	Number of offenders														
	2007					*2008*					*2009*				
	White	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*
Violence against the person	133	18				173	12	1			229	18	3		1
Sexual offences	3					3	1				2	1			
Burglary	54	2				58	2	1			65	6	1		
Robbery							1								
Theft and handling stolen goods	1,003	76	12	1	3	1,332	98	17	2	6	1,754	124	18	5	2
Fraud and forgery	18	4	3		1	28	5	4			28	1	2		
Criminal damage	20	2				27	1				21	1			
Drug offences	77	11	1	1		109	18	2	2		163	29	3	1	3
Indictable motoring offences	1					3					1				
Other indictable offences	147	13	1			175	9	1			172	4	2		
Total	1,456	126	17	2	4	1,908	147	26	4	6	2,435	184	29	6	6

Table 9: Number of offenders with 76 to 100 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and ethnicity, 2007-09

England and Wales

	Number of offenders														
	2007					*2008*					*2009*				
	White	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*
Violence against the person	74	2				78	3				82	12			
Sexual offences	1														
Burglary	1	1				11					12				
Robbery															
Theft and handling stolen goods	190	8	1	1		252	17		4		257	20		3	

Table 9: Number of offenders with 76 to 100 previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and ethnicity, 2007-09

England and Wales

	Number of offenders														
	2007					*2008*					*2009*				
	White	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*
Fraud and forgery	2					5	2				9	1			
Criminal damage	2					9					1				
Drug offences	5					16	4				17	2			
Indictable motoring offences															
Other indictable offences	46					41	2		1		38	1			
Total	321	11	1	1	0	412	28	0	5	0	416	36	0	3	0

Table 10: Number of offenders with 101 or more previous convictions or cautions who did not receive an immediate custodial sentence for an indictable offence by offence category and ethnicity, 2007-09

England and Wales

	Number of offenders														
	2007					*2008*					*2009*				
	White	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Other*	*NR*
Violence against the person	47	2	1		1	81				4	88	4	1		
Sexual offences						1					1				
Burglary						4	1				1				
Robbery															
Theft and handling stolen goods	122	6	2		9	187	10			6	224	6	1		10
Fraud and forgery	3	1			1	3	1				2				
Criminal damage	4						1								
Drug offences	4	1				6					8	1			
Indictable motoring offences															
Other indictable offences	37	1	1			33	1			1	34	2			2
Total	217	11	4	0	11	315	14	0	0	11	358	13	2	0	12

NR = Not recorded.

Slavery

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many cases relating to *(a)* domestic slavery and *(b)* trafficked women have been heard (i) in Coventry, (ii) in the West Midlands and (iii) nationally in each of the last five years; and how many such cases (A) with and (B) without legal aid were upheld. [31509]

Mr Blunt: Cases related to human trafficking in the period 2005 to 2009 (latest available) were proceeded against under Sexual Offences Act 2003 and for forced labour under Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004.

The number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for these offences in the west midlands police force area and England and Wales, 2005 to 2009 is shown in the following table. There were no reported proceedings of these offences at individual courts within the Coventry local justice area.

Cases of domestic slavery may also be dealt with under S71 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 which came into force on 6 April 2010. Court proceedings data for 2010 are planned for publication in the spring of 2011.

Data collated centrally by the Ministry of Justice contain information on defendants proceeded against, found guilty and sentenced for criminal offences in England and Wales. Information about the circumstances of each case, other than that specified in statute, is not collected centrally. It is not possible to separately identify from proceedings for offences of human trafficking those cases which related specifically to the trafficking of women or whether legal aid was provided.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 for human trafficking offences[1] in England and Wales and the west midlands police force area, 2005-09[2,3,4,5]

Statute		*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
England and Wales						
Sexual Offences Act 2003	Proceeded against	26	40	25	53	33
	Found guilty	12	15	15	24	23
Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004	Proceeded against	1	3	2	8	14
	Found guilty	0	6	8	0	2
Total	Proceeded against	27	43	27	61	47
	Found guilty	12	21	23	24	25
West midlands						
Sexual Offences Act 2003	Proceeded against	5	2	0	0	6
	Found guilty	0	2	2	0	1
Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004	Proceeded against	0	0	0	0	3
	Found guilty	0	0	0	0	0
Total	Proceeded against	5	2	0	0	9
	Found guilty	0	2	2	0	1

Notes:

Includes offences under:

[1] The Sexual Offences Act 2003 and the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004

Sexual Offences Act 2003 s.57

- Trafficking into the UK for sexual exploitation
- Trafficking within the UK for sexual exploitation
- Trafficking out of the UK for sexual exploitation

Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 s.4(1) and (5)

- Trafficking people into the UK for the purpose of exploitation
- Trafficking people within the UK for the purpose of exploitation
- Trafficking people out of the UK

[2] The figures given in the table on court proceedings relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[3] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

[4] Excludes data for Cardiff magistrates court for April, July and August 2008.

[5] The number of defendants found guilty in a particular year may exceed the number proceeded against as the proceedings in the magistrates' court took place in an earlier year and the defendants were found guilty at the Crown Court in the following year, or the defendants were found guilty of a different offence to that for which they were originally proceeded against.

Source:

Justice Statistics Analytical Services, Ministry of Justice

WORK AND PENSIONS

Access to Work Programme

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he has plans to review the level of employer contribution to the Access to Work programme. [19992]

Maria Miller: Access to Work is a programme that supports disabled people with the extra costs they may face over and above what would be judged to be reasonable for the employer to cover themselves to fulfil their legal obligations under equality legislation.

The level of contributions made by employers was adjusted from April 2010 so that larger employers contribute more than small employers, with micro employers exempted from contributions. We will keep the level of expected contributions under review, to ensure that employers contribute at a reasonable level and the programme continues to be as effective and efficient as possible.

Rehman Chishti: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his policy is on providing employees with specialist adapted equipment through the Access to Work programme. [19993]

Maria Miller: The Access to Work programme provides funding for a wide range of practical support to help disabled people get and keep employment, including specialist or adapted equipment that is beyond what it is reasonable to expect an employer to provide. Access to Work continues to be an important part of the range of employment support that the Government have in place to assist disabled people.

Annuitising Sums

Rachel Reeves: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will bring forward proposals to *(a)* facilitate and *(b)* reduce the cost of annuitising sums of less than £5,000. [32231]

Steve Webb: There are already rules in the pensions tax system designed to help those with a low level of overall pension savings, or with individual, small occupational pension pots.

The trivial commutation rule allow individuals who are 60 or over with total pension savings below £18,000 to withdraw all their savings as a lump sum. The first 25% of this lump sum is tax-free, with the remainder taxable as income. In addition, certain small occupational pension pots of less than £2,000 can also be taken as a lump sum, even where an individual has savings in excess of the aggregate limit.

Some people may already be able to amalgamate their savings, or may be offered an annuity by their pension provider. Evidence shows that an annuity can be purchased with pension pots of as little as £5,000.

The Government recognise that some people with pots of less that £5,000 may have difficulties when it comes to annuitisation. DWP is considering the long-term consequences of automatic-enrolment to better understand the implications for employers and schemes in administering small pots and also to help individuals maximise their savings.

DWP is working with HMT, HMRC, FSA and TPR to share knowledge. We will consider whether any action may be needed to address issues around small pots.

Child Poverty Act 2010

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his policy is on the implementation of the Child Poverty Act 2010; and if he will make a statement. [25865]

Maria Miller: The coalition document reaffirmed our commitment to the goal of ending child poverty by 2020 and the importance the Government place on tackling child poverty and improving life chances cannot be overstated.

We have today published a consultation on our approach to child poverty. The consultation fulfils the requirement in the Child Poverty Act 2010 to consult with specified groups, including children, young people and their parents in developing a child poverty strategy. We will publish our first strategy under the Act in spring 2011.

Local authorities and partners are currently taking forward their needs assessments and developing strategies in accordance with the requirements in Part 2 of the Act and a package of support developed with the sector was launched in September.

Child Support Agency

Alok Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many clients of the Child Support Agency are registered under the *(a)* 1993 and *(b)* 2002 scheme. [29994]

Maria Miller: The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission is responsible for the child maintenance system. I have asked the Child Maintenance Commissioner to write to the hon. Member with the information requested and I have seen the response.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Child Maintenance Commissioner as the Child Support Agency is now the responsibility of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many clients of the Child Support Agency are registered under the (a) 1993 and (b) 2002 scheme.[29994]

To clarify the Child Support Agency runs two child maintenance schemes: the Old Scheme, used for cases assessed between 5 April 1993 and 2 March 2003, and the Current Scheme, used for cases assessed after 3 March 2003.

At September 2010 the Child Support Agency was dealing with 1,153,900 live and assessed cases of which 738,300 cases were operating under Current Scheme rules and 415,600 cases under Old Scheme rules.

The latest figures showing the caseload of the Child Support Agency by scheme are routinely published in the Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics (QSS): the latest version of which is available in the House of Commons Library or online at:

http://www.childmaintenance.org/en/publications/statistics.html

I hope you find this answer helpful.

Cold Weather Payments

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he has assessed the accuracy of existing mechanisms to measure temperatures for the purposes of making cold weather payments; and if he will make a statement. [32141]

Steve Webb: The postcode to weather station linkages used for the cold weather payment scheme are reviewed after the end of each winter. Expert advice is sought from the Met Office and changes made where appropriate before the start of the next winter period. Representations made during the previous winter about the suitability of the links between postcode districts and individual weather stations are also considered. Using postcodes linked to representative weather stations is a straightforward way to administer the scheme as the benefit computer systems can identify eligible customers and enables payments to be issued quickly and in the main automatically.

For winter 2010-11 there are seven new weather stations used as part of the cold weather payment scheme, while one will no longer be used. As a result, some of the postcodes that were linked to existing weather stations during winter 2009-10 have been reassigned to the new weather stations.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether those entitled to receive cold weather payments will be entitled to receive such payments after the introduction of the universal credit. [32354]

Steve Webb: The recent White Paper "Universal Credit: welfare that works" (Cm 7957) set out our intention that those elements of the social fund, such as cold weather payments, which lend themselves to simple automated delivery will be incorporated into universal credit and be paid automatically when the qualifying criteria are met.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether claimants of *(a)* jobseeker's allowance and *(b)* employment and support allowance who are eligible to receive cold weather payments will receive such payments if they begin their claim following the introduction of universal credit. [32355]

Steve Webb: The recent White Paper "Universal Credit: welfare that works" (Cm 7957) set out our intention that those elements of the social fund, such as cold weather payments, which lend themselves to simple automated delivery will be incorporated into universal credit and be paid automatically when the qualifying criteria are met.

Disability Living Allowance

Graeme Morrice: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the likely effects on those who live in residential care homes of the implementation of his proposals to remove the mobility component of disability living allowance from such people; what representations he has received on his proposals; and if he will make a statement. [24855]

Maria Miller: The effect of the measure is that people who live in state funded residential care homes will cease to be paid the mobility component of disability living allowance (DLA) after 28 days. While these residents will not be paid DLA, they will retain an underlying entitlement to the benefit and it will be reinstated if they leave the care home providing they continue to satisfy the conditions of entitlement. The planned implementation date is October 2012. The change will not apply to residents who meet the full costs of the care home themselves; they will continue to be paid any care or mobility components of disability living allowance they are entitled to. The change will affect around 80,000 people.

This is a highly complex area in terms of both funding streams and the different responsibilities of all the parties involved and there are a maze of legal duties, contractual obligations and service levels to take into account. Local authorities have a duty to carry out an assessment of need for community care services for individuals. Based on that assessment a decision is made as to which of those assessed needs should be met by specific services.

We have received a number of representations in the form of parliamentary questions and correspondence since the measure was announced. The Equality Impact Assessment for removing the mobility component of disability living allowance from state-funded care home residents after 28 days will be published with the proposed legislation.

Stephen Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether the proposed removal of mobility allowance for disabled children after 84 days in residential care will apply to children in residential education settings; [25759]

(2) whether residential schools for disabled children will be classified as care homes for the purposes of the proposed changes to the mobility element of the disability living allowance. [25746]

Maria Miller: This will be informed by responses to the consultation document which was published on 6 December 2010.

We will be making clearer as we move towards the Bill exactly how the measure to cease paying mobility component of DLA to people in care homes will affect particular groups.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people living in state-funded residential care used the Motability scheme in the latest period for which figures are available; and what estimate he has made of the number of people likely to be affected by the implementation of his proposals to remove the mobility component of disability living allowance. [28221]

Maria Miller: There are currently around 575,000 people on the Motability scheme and we estimate that around 12,000 of them will be affected by the measure to cease paying the mobility component of disability living allowance to people in residential care after 28 days. The Department is discussing the proposed measure with Motability to enable them to decide how best they can manage the impact of this change on their customers.

We estimate that approximately 80,000 people who claim disability living allowance and live in residential care will be affected by the measure to cease paying the mobility component in Great Britain from October 2012.

Local authority contracts with care homes will cover services to meet a resident's assessed needs. This will cover activities of daily living which may include providing access to doctors, dentists and local services such as libraries and banks. In addition, care homes are required where practicable to promote the independence, participation and community involvement of their residents.

This is a highly complex area in terms of both funding streams and the different responsibilities of all the parties involved and there are a maze of legal duties, contractual obligations and service levels to take into account. For example, NHS- funded individuals in residential care do not receive the DLA mobility component, while those funded by local authorities do.

People are also invited to put forward their views on this proposal as part of the wider DLA reform consultation document which was published on 6 December 2010. This can be found on the Department's website at

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2010/dla-reform.shtml

The consultation ends on 14 February 2011.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what account he took of Article 20 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in formulating his proposals to remove the mobility component of disability living allowance. [28223]

Maria Miller: The Government take their obligations under the United Nations convention on the rights of disabled people into account as they develop policies and programmes. The report that Government will make to the United Nations next year will demonstrate how across Departments we have taken forward implementation in respect of article 20 and the convention as a whole.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which *(a)* organisations and *(b)* individuals he consulted on his proposals to remove the mobility component of disability living allowance; and what arrangements are in place for consultation on the implementation of his proposals. [28224]

Maria Miller: As part of the spending review all organisations are given the opportunity to contribute to the priorities of the spending review. All measures are subject to the parliamentary process, and we are committed to the involvement of charities, third sector organisations and other disability organisations in the ongoing development of policy in these areas.

People are also invited to put forward their views on this proposal as part of the wider DLA reform consultation document which was published on 6 December 2010. This can be found on the Department's website at:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2010/dla-reform.shtml

The consultation ends on 14 February 2011.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will consult users of Motability vehicles and their representatives on the implementation of his proposals to remove the mobility component of disability living allowance. [28225]

Maria Miller: Motability users will be able to put forward their views on this proposal as part of the wider DLA reform consultation document which was published on 6 December 2010.

We have already consulted with Motability who are considering how they will manage any impact this measure will have on individuals affected by it.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the average change in the amount of disability allowance received by people *(a)* who pay for their own care, *(b)* in residential care funded by the NHS and *(c)* in residential care funded by a local authority as a result of the implementation of his proposals to remove the mobility component of disability living allowance. [28226]

Maria Miller: The information is as follows.

(a) Disabled people who pay for all care home costs themselves will continue to be paid the care and mobility components of DLA they are entitled to.

(b) Patients in NHS funded hospitals or similar institutions, including NHS funded residents in residential care homes, already cease to be paid both the care and mobility components of disability living allowance after 28 days (84 days in the case of children aged under 16) on the principle of double provision.

(c) Care home residents who are funded by local authorities cease to be paid any care component of disability living allowance they may be entitled to after 28 days. Of those who currently receive the mobility component of DLA, those on the lower rate will no longer receive £18.95 and those on the higher rate will no longer receive £49.85 per week from October 2012.

Local authority contracts with care homes will cover services to meet a resident's assessed needs. This will cover activities of daily living which may include providing access to doctors, dentists and local services such as libraries and banks. In addition, care homes are required where practicable to promote the independence, participation and community involvement of their residents.

This is a highly complex area in terms of both funding streams and the different responsibilities of all the parties involved and there are a maze of legal duties, contractual obligations and service levels to take into account. For example, NHS- funded individuals in residential care do not receive the DLA mobility component, while those funded by local authorities do.

Disabled people and their representatives can put forward their views on this proposal as part of the wider DLA reform consultation document, which was published on 6 December 2010.

Disability Living Allowance: Belfast

Naomi Long: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many individuals in Belfast East constituency he expects to be affected by the removal of the mobility component of disability living allowance from those in residential care homes. [30662]

Maria Miller: This is the responsibility of Alex Attwood, Minister of Social Development in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Disability Living Allowance: Care Homes

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effects on disabled people of the removal of the mobility component of the disability living allowance for those living in residential care homes. [28673]

Maria Miller: The effect of the measure is that people who live in state funded residential care homes will cease to be paid the mobility component of disability living allowance (DLA) after 28 days. While these residents will not be paid DLA, they will retain an underlying entitlement to the benefit and it will be reinstated if they leave the care home providing they continue to satisfy the conditions of entitlement. The planned implementation date is October 2012. The change will not apply to residents who meet the full costs of the care home themselves; they will continue to be paid any care or mobility components of disability living allowance they are entitled to. The change will affect around 80,000 people.

This is a highly complex area in terms of both funding streams and the different responsibilities of all the parties involved and there are a maze of legal duties, contractual obligations and service levels to take into account. Local authorities have a duty to carry out an assessment of need for community care services for individuals. Based on that assessment a decision is made as to which of those assessed needs should be met by specific services.

Care homes are required, where practicable, to promote the independence, participation and community involvement of their residents.

Consideration was given to the equality impacts of the measure when the proposal was being developed.

The equality impact assessment for removing the mobility component of disability living allowance from state funded care home residents after 28 days will be published with the proposed legislation.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what legal advice his Department has sought from the Attorney-General on the compatibility of his Department's proposed removal of the mobility component of disability living allowance from long-stay residents of local authority-funded care homes or colleges from October 2012 with the Government's international obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; and if he will make a statement. [29556]

Maria Miller: By long-standing convention, observed by successive administrations and embodied in the Ministerial Code, the fact that the Law Officers have advised (or have not advised) on a particular issue, and the content of any advice, is not disclosed outside government.

Disability Living Allowance: Glasgow

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in receipt of disability living allowance and aged between 25 and 35 years are resident in Glasgow North constituency; and how many of these are in receipt of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance. [30522]

Maria Miller: The numbers of people in receipt of disability living allowance aged between 25 and 35 in Glasgow North constituency is provided in the following table.

DLA Claimants aged 25-35 (inclusive) in Glasgow North parliamentary constituency. May 2010, aged 25-35 (inclusive)

	Number
Glasgow North parliamentary constituency	400

Notes:

1. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Figures do not include people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.
3. Constituencies used are for the Westminster Parliament of May 2010.
4. Information is available on the number of housing benefit claimants in receipt of a passported benefit, such as income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, income-based employment support allowance and pension credit (guaranteed credit). Disability living allowance is not a housing benefit passported benefit, therefore the number of DLA claimants also receiving housing benefit is not available.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

The numbers of people in receipt of disability living allowance aged between 25 and 35 in Glasgow North constituency who are also in receipt of housing benefit and local housing allowance is not available.

Disability Living Allowance: Public Finance

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate his Department has made of the cost to the public purse of administering *(a)* disability living allowance in (i) 2011-12 and (ii) 2012-13 and *(b)* his Department's proposed personal independence payment in (A) 2013-14 and (B) 2014-15. [29829]

Maria Miller: We are currently consulting how the personal independence payment will be assessed and administered and so cannot provide details for costs in 2011-12, 2013-14 or 2014-15 at this stage. However, in 2009-10 the cost of administering disability living allowance was £193 million.

The Government will set out further detail at the earliest appropriate point.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate his Department has made of the cost to the public purse of *(a)* disability living allowance in 2010-11 and *(b)* his Department's proposed personal independence payment in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15. [29830]

Maria Miller: Benefit expenditure on disability living allowance is forecast to be £12.1 billion in 2010-11.

Combined benefit expenditure for disability living allowance and personal independence payment is projected to be £12.7 billion in 2013-14 and £12.2 billion in 2014-15.

All expenditure is in real terms and is available from the DWP benefit expenditure tables at:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/alltables_budget2010.xls

Disability Living Allowance: Sunderland

Julie Elliott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in receipt of disability living allowance aged between 25 and 35 years are resident in Sunderland Central constituency; and how many of these are also in receipt of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* local housing allowance. [30366]

Maria Miller: The numbers of people in receipt of disability living allowance aged between 25 and 35 in Sunderland Central constituency is provided in the following table.

DLA Claimants aged 25-35 (inclusive) in Sunderland Central parliamentary constituency—May 2010 Aged 25-35 (inclusive)

Sunderland Central parliamentary constituency	450

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

The numbers of people in receipt of disability living allowance aged between 25 and 35 in Sunderland Central constituency who are also in receipt of housing benefit and local housing allowance is not available.

Notes:

1. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest ten;
2. Figures do not include people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.
3. Constituencies used are for the Westminster Parliament of May 2010.
4. Information is available on the number of housing benefit claimants in receipt of a passported benefit, such as income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, income-based employment support allowance and pension credit (guaranteed credit). Disability living allowance is not a housing benefit passported benefit, therefore the number of DLA claimants also receiving housing benefit is not available.

Employment and Support Allowance

Kate Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the likely effect on levels of child poverty of the removal of contributory employment and support allowance after one year. [21919]

Maria Miller: The proposal to time-limit contributory employment and support allowance to one year for those in the Work Related Activity Group is estimated to have no significant impact on child poverty as measured by the equivalised poverty threshold of 60% of the median household income.

Notes:

1. There is unavoidable uncertainty whenever estimating the effect of policy changes on poverty. Uncertainty arises because HBAI poverty statistics are based on survey data which only captures a sample of households from the population — this sampling introduces variability from year to year in statistics as the survey sample is redrawn and new people are interviewed.

2. Uncertainty also arises because estimated policy effects are dependent on modelling assumptions which may be imperfect.

3. Poverty statistics are routinely rounded to the nearest 100,000. This is a reflection of the degree of confidence we should have when examining and comparing these statistics across groups and over time.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of employment and support allowance (ESA) claimants receive *(a)* income-related and *(b)* contributory ESA. [28745]

Maria Miller: The information requested is provided in the following table:

Employment and support allowance claimants by payment type as a percentage of all employment and support allowance claimants, as of May 2010

	All employment and support allowance claimants	*Contribution based*	*Both income and contributions based*	*Income based*	*No payments credits only*
Total	527,120	189,280	33,180	239,150	65,510
Percentage of all claimants	—	35.9	6.3	45.4	12.4

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claims from 27 October 2008.
3. The type of Employment and Support Allowance is defined as pay status at the caseload date - this may differ to the status at the start or end of the claim, as changes in an individual's circumstances may affect their benefit entitlement.
4. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.
5. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100%.

Employment and Support Allowance

Stephen Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what financial support will be available for individuals who do not qualify for income-related employment and support allowance (ESA) after 12 months in the work-related activity group of contributory ESA; what entitlement to income-related ESA a person with a partner earning an income of £145 a week or more will have; and if he will make a statement. [30684]

Maria Miller: A claimant who does not qualify for income-related employment and support allowance after they have received 12 months of contributory employment and support allowance in the Work Related Activity Group may be able to claim a number of benefits depending on their circumstances. Depending on their rental circumstances, they may be eligible for housing benefit and council tax benefit. If they are aged 60 or over, they may be eligible for pension credit. If they have a partner who is working 16 hours or more a week, they may be able to claim working tax credit. However, any benefit entitlement will depend on individual circumstances.

A claimant will retain any entitlement to disability living allowance, provided they continue to meet the qualifying conditions.

In the case of a person with a partner earning £145 or more a week, entitlement to income-related employment and support allowance is retained as long as the partner is not working for more than 24 hours a week on average, and does not have net earnings in excess of £148.69 a week. The customer and partner must also not be in possession of savings in excess of £16,000.

This level ensures that the couple have a weekly income equal to the couples' rate of employment and support allowance of £102.75, the Work Relate Activity component of £25.95, and up to £20 a week in additional income from the partner's work income.

A person in the Work Related Activity Group with a partner earning £145 a week would therefore be entitled to £3.70 a week in income-related employment and support allowance. Above the threshold of £148.69 a week, entitlement to income-related employment and support allowance would cease.

Housing Benefit

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of individuals who have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance for over 12 months who are in receipt of housing benefit. [25995]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

Neither the total number of jobseeker's allowance claimants receiving housing benefit nor the duration of such claims is available. The relevant analysis has not been quality assured to National Statistics standard, and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the average monetary value of weekly housing benefit payments made to individuals who have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance for over 12 months in the latest period for which figures are available. [26089]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

Neither the total number of jobseeker's allowance claimants receiving housing benefit nor the duration of such claims is available. The relevant analysis has not been quality assured to National Statistics standard, and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

We will publish an impact assessment for the proposal 10% reduction to HB in the normal way, accompanying the relevant legislation when introduced in Parliament.

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what restrictions he plans to place on the disbursement of *(a)* homelessness prevention funding and *(b)* discretionary housing payments from funds allocated to local authorities since the June 2010 Budget. [28738]

Steve Webb: Discretionary housing payments are only available to people who are entitled to housing benefit or council tax benefit. They are primarily intended to make up shortfalls in entitlement to benefit where the local authority considers that the person concerned is in need of further help with their housing costs. Decisions on awards are made at the local authority's discretion within the framework contained in the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001. We do not intend to change these arrangements but we are trebling the funding we provide local authorities, to £60 million a year, from April 2012 and increasing their budgets by £10 million in 2011-12.

Homelessness funding is made available to local authorities by the Department for Communities and Local Government, and is intended to tackle and prevent homelessness. The grant is un-ringfenced grant and it is for local authorities to determine how the funding is best used to meet the needs of their communities.

Housing Benefit: Homelessness

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he has issued guidance to local authorities on ensuring that no person becomes homeless as a result of the planned changes in local housing allowance. [32356]

Steve Webb: We are providing an additional £130 million to local authority discretionary housing payment budgets over the spending review period to support households who need help with retaining an existing tenancy or finding alternative accommodation. We will be issuing further good practice guidance to local authorities early next year with suggestions as to how they might use the funding to best support those households affected by changes to local housing allowance rates.

Housing Benefit: Jobseeker's Allowance

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of people who have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance for over 12 months also receive housing benefit. [24775]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

Neither the total number of jobseeker's allowance claimants receiving housing benefit nor the duration of such claims is available. This analysis has not been quality assured to National Statistics standard, and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

We will publish an impact assessment for the proposal 10% reduction to HB in the normal way, accompanying the relevant legislation when introduced in Parliament.

Housing Benefit: Mortgages

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the potential effects of the change in the rate used to calculate support for mortgage interest payments on the number of people entitled to passported benefits. [32353]

Steve Webb: This information is not available.

Incapacity Benefit

Stephen Timms: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he plans to take to support people in receipt of incapacity benefit after the existing New Deal for Disabled People contracts end, and before the start of the Work programme. [31132]

Maria Miller: From April 2011 more personalised support will be available through Jobcentre Plus as we introduce a new flexible offer. This support will be available to all customers in receipt of working age benefits and customers on incapacity benefit will be able to access it on a voluntary basis. This support will complement the Work programme, which will be introduced by summer 2011.

Where appropriate, incapacity benefit customers will also be able to access Work Choice, launched on 25 October, which provides tailored support to help disabled people who face the most complex barriers to employment find and stay in work and ultimately help them progress into unsupported employment.

In addition, customers can also access programmes like Access to Work, Remploy and Residential Training for unemployed disabled adults whose needs cannot be met through any other Government-funded programmes.

I announced in a written ministerial statement on 2 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 89-90WS, an independent review of the specialist disability employment support the Government provide to disabled people who want to work. This review will be conducted by Liz Sayce, chief executive of the disability organisation RADAR.

Incapacity Benefit: Medical Examinations

Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what mechanisms will be in place to ensure that there are employment opportunities for people who *(a)* cannot stand or walk for any length of time, *(b)* are classified as capable of some work by the new medical assessment for incapacity benefit claimants and *(c)* require other adjustments to working conditions to enable them to work. [22310]

Maria Miller: We are committed to ensuring that disabled people have the same employment opportunities and chances as everyone else to find and stay in work, regardless of their disability.

As part of this commitment, the Department for Work and Pensions is responsible for a range of employment provision specifically aimed at disabled people.

Work Choice - launched on 25 October, provides tailored support to help disabled people who face the most complex barriers to employment find and stay in work and ultimately help them progress into unsupported employment, where it is appropriate for the individual. Work Choice is voluntary and available regardless of any benefits being claimed.

Access to Work - provides practical advice and financial support to employed disabled people above and beyond what the employer could reasonably provide, to help them overcome obstacles resulting from disability and thus stay in work.

In addition, Remploy is an executive non departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions. It delivers a range of employment and development opportunities for disabled people under the Work Choice programme.

The Department for Work and Pensions also funds Residential Training for unemployed disabled adults whose needs cannot be met through any other Government funded programmes.

On Thursday 2 December, I announced in a written ministerial statement an independent review of the support the Government provide to disabled people who want to work. This review will be conducted by Liz Sayce, Chief Executive of the disability organisation RADAR.

Independent Living Fund

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what research his Department has undertaken on the performance and effectiveness of the Independent Living Fund since May 2010. [32162]

Maria Miller: The Independent Living Fund is a non-departmental public body managed by a board of trustees. The fund operates within the terms of a trust deed and conditions of grant agreement. The Department has agreed key performance targets with the Independent Living Fund and performance against these targets is monitored regularly. The Department has six monthly accountability meetings with the Independent Living Fund, the most recent was on 27 September 2010.

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what disability organisations he has met to discuss the future of the Independent Living Fund since his appointment; [32163]

(2) on what dates he has met *(a)* disability organisations, *(b)* local government representatives and *(c)* ministerial colleagues in the Department of Health to discuss the future of the Independent Living Fund since his appointment. [32164]

Maria Miller: I have met with a number of disability organisations and other bodies to discuss the future of the Independent Living Fund: the Chair of Equality 2025 on 8 June 2010; the all party parliamentary group on disability on 21 June 2010; and the Disability Charities Consortium and the Disabled People's Organisations Group on 28 July 2010. I have met with other disability organisations individually, including speaking with the National Centre for Independent Living (NCIL) most recently on 13 October 2010, and will continue to do so as we consider the future on the Independent Living Fund in the context of the forthcoming spending review.

I met with ministerial colleagues in the Department of Health on 9th June, 27 July, 13 October and 15 November.

I met the Trustees and management of the Independent Living Fund on 1 June 2010, 22 July 2010 and 15 September 2010.

Independent Living Fund

Dr Whiteford: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much funding was allocated through the Independent Living Fund (ILF) to each local authority in the latest period for which figures are available; and how many service users received support through the ILF towards their case costs in each such authority. [31193]

Maria Miller: The Independent Living Fund does not allocate funding to local authorities. The Independent Living Fund is a discretionary trust which makes direct cash payments to severely disabled people to purchase personal care or help with domestic duties from a care agency or privately employed personal assistant.

The available information on the number of Independent Living Fund users and the amount of money paid in each local authority area for the latest period available has been placed in the Library.

Inflation: Consumer Prices Index

Rachel Reeves: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what discussions he has had with the Royal Statistical Society on the use of the consumer prices index as a measure for inflation compensation; and if he will make a statement; [32228]

(2) what discussions he has had with the UK Statistics Authority on the use of the consumer price index as a measure for inflation compensation; [32229]

(3) what discussions he has had with the Office for National Statistics on the use of the consumer price index as a measure for inflation compensation. [32230]

Steve Webb: The Government believes that CPI is the appropriate index for measuring changes in the cost of living. It may be helpful if I set out some of the consideration that were factors in our reasoning:

1. The CPI is the headline measure of inflation in Great Britain, forming the target for the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee;

2. The CPI excludes mortgage interest payments, which are not relevant to the majority of pensioners and benefit recipients;

3. The methodology used the calculate the CPI takes into account the fact that many people tend to trade down to cheaper goods when prices rise which the RPI does not;

4. In terms of population coverage the Retail Price Index (RPI) excludes a significant group of pensioners (pensioner households who receive 75% or more of their income from the State). The CPI includes those pensioners.

The decision to switch to the CPI for price measurement for benefit and pension uprating, and provide the statutory minimum for occupational pension indexation, was taken by DWP Ministers with advice following discussions between DWP, HMT and other Departments, using appropriate evidence including that made available by the Office for National Statistics, over which the UK Statistics Authority has oversight. No discussions have taken place between the Department and the Royal Statistical Society on this matter.

Jobcentres: Sanctions

Kate Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether Jobcentre Plus has set any targets for the number of sanctions to be issued by each Jobcentre Plus officer; [31121]

(2) whether Jobcentre Plus has established any targets for the number of sanctions to be issued by each Jobcentre Plus office. [31065]

Chris Grayling: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Darra Singh. I have asked him to provide the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Ruth Owen:

The Secretary of State has asked Darra Singh to reply to your question asking whether Jobcentre Plus has set any targets for the number of sanctions to be issued by each Jobcentre Plus officer and whether Jobcentre Plus has established any targets for the number of sanctions to be issued by each Jobcentre Plus office. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to Darra Singh as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus. As Darra Singh is currently unavailable, I am replying in his absence.

Jobcentre Plus is responsible for ensuring customers are compliant with the conditions of entitlement and remain eligible to receive Jobseeker's Allowance. To help ensure the associated sanctions regime is applied efficiently, effectively and consistently across Districts, Jobcentre Plus has established the following internal benchmarks:

A minimum of 6% of the JSA live load is referred to Decision Makers to consider areas of doubt arising from entitlement and sanctions, and

At least 50% of these referrals result in decisions adverse to the customer

These are benchmarks and not targets. There is no 'right level' of referrals. The intention is that, if District performance is significantly different from this benchmark, either above or below, this is a signal to management to assure themselves that processes are being followed correctly, fairly and consistently.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Mr Douglas Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of jobseeker's allowance (JSA) claimants receive *(a)* income-related and *(b)* contributory JSA. [28746]

Chris Grayling: The information requested is in the following table. These data can be accessed via the Department's website at:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=tabtool

Number of people in receipt of jobseeker's allowance, May 2010

		Contributory jobseeker's allowance only	*Income-based and contributory jobseeker's allowance*	*Income-based jobseeker's allowance only*	*No payments-credits only*
Total	1,354,600	205,300	21,200	1,010,900	117,300
Percentage of all claimants		15.2	1.6	74.6	8.7

Notes:
1. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. Figures have been uprated using 5% proportions against 100% WPLS totals.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
4. Percentages are shown to one decimal place.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) Information Directorate, 5% samples.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants of support for mortgage interest who claimed jobseeker's allowance after 5 January 2009 will lose their entitlement to support for mortgage interest if they are in receipt of jobseeker's allowance in *(a)* January 2011, *(b)* February 2011, *(c)* March 2011, *(d)* April 2011, *(e)* May 2011 and *(f)* June 2011; and if he will make a statement. [32359]

Steve Webb: The two year limit on payment of support for mortgage interest to income-based jobseeker's allowance claimants is underpinned by the principle of providing short-term help through the benefits system.

When claimants who are subject to the two year limit are first awarded support for mortgage interest on their income-based Jobseeker's Allowance claims, they receive a decision notification. This letter gives the end date of their support for mortgage interest, which is the two year limit. In addition to this, the leaflet IS8, that is issued to claimants with mortgages when they claim benefit, contains a section that explains how the two year limit operates and who it applies to.

Claimants who are subject to the two year limit will receive a letter eight weeks before the two year limit date, which advises them that their mortgage interest payments will be withdrawn.

In line with commitments made when the measures were introduced on 5 January 2009, officials will complete an analytical evaluation of the two year limit in January 2011, which will include affected caseload. When complete, and subject to quality assurance tests, we will consider publication of this report in early 2011.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants of working age have claimed jobseeker's allowance *(a)* twice, *(b)* three times, *(c)* four times, *(d)* five times and *(e)* more than five times in a 12 month period in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [31770]

Mr Hurd: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking how many claimants of working age have claimed jobseeker's allowance (a) twice, (b) three times, (c) four times, (d) five times and (e) more than five times in a 12 month period in each of the last five years. (31770).

Table 1 gives the information requested for the 12 month periods ending November from 2006 to 2010. These estimates have been derived using data from the Jobcentre Plus 5% cohort. This is a sample of the Jobcentre Plus administrative system.

Table 1: Number of people claiming jobseeker's allowance by number of claims in a 12 month period

	12 month period ending				
Number of claims	*November 2006*	*November 2007*	*November 2008*	*November 2009*	*November 2010*
2	329,840	326,820	391,860	582,380	505,280
3	74,620	84,500	106,860	141,700	127,940
4	17,460	22,380	28,920	37,660	34,840
5	4,600	6,800	8,080	11,780	10,960
More than 5	2,060	2,660	4,440	6,220	5,380

Source:
Jobcentreplus 5% cohort

Multi-Occupancy Lets: Edinburgh

Sheila Gilmore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of multi-occupancy lets of each tenure type in Edinburgh East constituency. [31398]

Steve Webb: The information is not available.

Pensions: Consumer Prices Index

Mr Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will publish each policy paper which informed his decision to uprate pensions and benefits in line with the consumer price index rather than the retail prices index. [32062]

Steve Webb: The decision to uprate pensions and benefits in line with the consumer prices index rather than the retail prices index was based on a range of factors including the fact that the CPI is the headline measure of inflation in Great Britain, and the coverage and methodology of each index. Policy advice to Ministers is not generally published.

Mr Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what account he took of his obligation under section 150 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 to reflect the general level of prices obtaining in Great Britain in deciding to uprate pensions and benefits in line with the consumer prices index. [32063]

Steve Webb: The Secretary of State took full account of his obligation under Section 150 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 to reflect the general level of prices obtaining in Great Britain, considering several factors when coming to a decision that the consumer prices index was the most appropriate way of measuring that level of prices. These included the facts that the consumer prices index is the headline measure of inflation in Great Britain, and that it has a basket of goods and methodology relevant to benefit recipients.

Personal Independence Payment

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate his Department has made of the number of people who will see their incomes *(a)* rise and *(b)* fall on introduction of the proposed personal independence payment in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15. [29831]

Maria Miller: Support through the proposed personal independence payment will be focused on those with the most need. The detailed criteria that will be used in the new assessment to determine eligibility for the rates of the benefit are currently being developed and a consultation process is also under way. At this stage, it is therefore not possible to provide an assessment of the impact of the personal independence payment on existing disability living allowance, or future recipients.

Poverty: Children

Laura Sandys: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to reduce child poverty in *(a)* South Thanet constituency and *(b)* England. [24587]

Maria Miller: The Government are committed to their goal of ending child poverty by 2020. We are committed to finding the right long-term solutions through prioritising opportunity, fairness and social mobility across our society.

Under the duties of Part Two of the Child Poverty Act, Kent county council is required to co-operate with its named partners to tackle child poverty in its local area. The county council is required to prepare and publish needs assessments—detailing the child poverty-related issues specific to the area, and develop a joint child poverty strategy which sets out how it plans to address those issues.

Margaret Curran: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many children were assessed as living in poverty *(a)* before and *(b)* after housing costs in (i) Scotland and (ii) Glasgow East constituency in each year since 2000. [32161]

Maria Miller: Estimates of the number and proportion of children living in poverty in Scotland are published in 'Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland: 2008-09'. This uses household income adjusted (or 'equivalised') for household size and composition, to provide a proxy for standard of living.

As they are based on survey data, child poverty estimates published in Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland do not allow analysis by parliamentary constituency. However, figures for Scotland are set out the following table.

Percentage and number of children living in relative poverty before housing costs (BHC) and after housing costs (AHC)

	Relative poverty in Scottish households			
Period	*BHC (%)*	*BHC (thousand)*	*AHC (%)*	*AHC (thousand)*
2000-01	27	280	32	340
2001-02	27	280	31	330
2002-03	25	260	27	280
2003-04	24	250	27	280

Percentage and number of children living in relative poverty before housing costs (BHC) and after housing costs (AHC)

	Relative poverty in Scottish households			
Period	*BHC (%)*	*BHC (thousand)*	*AHC (%)*	*AHC (thousand)*
2004-05	21	210	25	250
2005-06	21	210	24	250
2006-07	21	210	25	250
2007-08	20	200	24	240
2008-09	21	210	26	260

Notes

1. The source of this information is the 'Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland: 2008-09' publication.

2. The income measures used to derive the estimates shown employ the same methodology as the Department for Work and Pensions publication 'Households Below Average Income' series, which uses disposable household income, adjusted (or 'equivalised') for household size and composition, as an income measure as a proxy for standard of living.

3. The figures are based on OECD equivalisation factors.

4. Figures are based on survey data and as such are subject to a degree of sampling and non-sampling error.

5. Numbers of children in low-income households have been rounded to the nearest 10,000 children.

6. The measures is defined as:

Relative poverty: percentage of children living in households with less than 60% of contemporary median household income.

7. Income after housing costs (AHC) is derived by deducting a measure of housing costs from the before housing costs (BHC) measure of income. These include (1) rent (gross of housing benefit), (2) water rates, community water charges and council water charges, (3) mortgage interest payments, and (4) structural insurance premiums (for owner occupiers), ground rent and service charges.

Source:

Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland: 2008-09

Private Rented Housing: Edinburgh

Sheila Gilmore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of private rented homes with *(a)* one and *(b)* two bedrooms with a rental in the bottom 30% of local market values in Edinburgh in the first six months of 2010. [31388]

Steve Webb: This information is not available.

Social Security Benefits

Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate his Department has made of the number and proportion of people who have moved off jobseeker's allowance onto *(a)* incapacity benefit and *(b)* income support in each of the last three years. [27443]

Maria Miller: The information is not available.

Although some information is available on NOMIS regarding destinations from jobseeker's allowance, the percentage of people leaving with an unknown destination recorded has increased over the last 10 years, and is now over 50%.

As the collection of these data is voluntary, they do not have sufficient coverage to be reliable.

Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the likely effects on problem drug users in receipt of benefits of his proposed changes to the benefits system. [25897]

Maria Miller: Our aim is to increase the number of drug and alcohol dependent benefit claimants who successfully engage with treatment and rehabilitation services and ultimately find employment, which is a key contributor to a sustained recovery.

Our welfare reforms will support this strategy by making sure that work always pays.

As announced in the Drug Strategy, "Reducing Demand, Restricting Supply, Building Recovery: Supporting People to Live a Drug Free Life" which was published on 8 December 2010 (a copy of which is available in the House of Commons Library) the Government will take a holistic approach to helping benefit claimants beat their drug and alcohol dependency, so they have every chance of competing in today's labour market.

Benefit claimants who decide to go into treatment will be offered every support to help overcome their addiction. Those who refuse treatment will still be able to claim unemployment benefits but, if as a consequence they are unable to comply with the normal conditions for receipt of benefits, they will face the same sanctions as every other jobseeker.

Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will take steps to ensure that his proposals for medical examinations for claimants of disability benefits include provision for the examination to be undertaken by a Welsh speaker. [16142]

Chris Grayling: The Medical Services Contract currently states that Atos Healthcare shall comply with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act to provide a bi-lingual service for those claimants who are resident in Wales in respect of correspondence, telephone and face to face communications, published and printed materials. Moving forward, the Department will of course continue to meet our obligations to comply with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act as part of the implementation of our proposals in this area.

Unemployment Benefits

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants of out-of-work benefits there were *(a)* in Brighton and Hove and *(b)* nationally in (i) 2005, (ii) 2006, (iii) 2007, (iv) 2008 and (v) 2009. [27231]

Chris Grayling: The information requested is as follows

Number of claimants of out of work benefits, in Great Britain and abroad and Brighton and Hove local authority

		JSA	*Incapacity Benefits*	*IS/PC*
May 2005	Great Britain and Abroad	800,660	2,783,670	3,485,580
	Brighton and Hove	4,630	12,730	15,130
May 2006	Great Britain and Abroad	895,880	2,729,880	3,508,140
	Brighton and Hove	4,920	12,660	15,170
May 2007	Great Britain and Abroad	807,270	2,685,240	3,525,010
	Brighton and Hove	4,240	12,960	15,010
May 2008	Great Britain and Abroad	787,870	2,637,560	3,488,190
	Brighton and Hove	4,160	13,010	14,730
May 2009	Great Britain and Abroad	1,443,000	2,662,480	3,482,740
	Brighton and Hove	6,930	13,310	14,700
May 2010	Great Britain and Abroad	1,354,620	2,653,810	3,453,130
	Brighton and Hove	6,220	13,750	14,370

Notes:

1. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. The data has been analysed by Statistical Groups which are hierarchical. A person who fits into more than one category will only appear in the top-most one for which they are eligible.

JSA - claimants of Jobseekers Allowance

Incapacity Benefits - claimants of Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance/Employment and Support Allowance

IS/PC - claimants of Income Support (and males age 60-64 claiming Pension Credit) that are not also claiming IB/SDA

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: 100% Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

Welfare State: Reform

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will publish his Department's impact assessment of the likely effects of proposed reductions in benefit payments on communities with a high dependence on welfare. [28165]

Chris Grayling: We will be publishing assessments of the impact of the changes the Government are making to benefits when the Welfare Reform Bill is presented to Parliament in the new year.

Internships: Greater London

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to encourage employers to offer internships to young people in *(a)* London and *(b)* Maidstone and the Weald constituency. [14730]

Chris Grayling: A comprehensive employer engagement strategy is used to encourage employers to offer work experience/internships. This strategy includes dedicated employer account managers who encourage a wide range of employers to register their work experience/internship opportunities on dedicated websites.

As of 13 October 2010 there are currently available 4,793 work experience opportunities. Over 900 of these opportunities cover the constituencies named. Since the programme started, we have successfully placed over 1,800 young people in a variety of opportunities across many occupations, industry sectors and employers—463 of these placements occurred in the constituencies named.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

North East England

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on what dates he has visited the North East since his appointment; and for what purpose were such visits. [31794]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I visited the north-east in August to promote regional growth.

DEFENCE

Armed Forces: Young People

Martin Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many armed forces service personnel under the age of 18 years *(a)* in training and *(b)* at trained strength were discharged in 2009-10; and what the reasons were for discharge in each case. [31573]

Peter Luff: Information is not held in the format requested. However, the data on the numbers of personnel under the age of 18 who left the services in 2009-10, where available, are provided in the following table.

	Outflow reason	*Trained*	*Untrained*	*Total*
Naval Service	Total outflow	15	190	205
	Voluntary outflow	~	115	120
	Other	10	70	80
	Not known	–	~	~
Army	Total outflow	25	1,150	1,180
	Voluntary outflow	~	590	595

	Outflow reason	*Trained*	*Untrained*	*Tota*
	Other	25	550	57
	Not known	[1]	10	10
RAF	Total outflow	105	[1]	10
	Voluntary outflow	[3]	[1]	
	Other	[3]	[1]	
	Not known	[3]	[1]	

[1] *Zero*

[2] A value less than five

[3] Not available

Note:

Figures have been rounded to the nearest five. Totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts.

While it is not possible, without incurring disproportionate cost, to identify the reason for leaving in each case, the Recruit Trainee Survey, January 2009 to December 2009, suggests that by far the majority of recruits leaving do so through their own choice. Of those, the most common reasons for leaving were missing family and friends too much, not liking the lifestyle or because the service was not what they expected. A copy of this survey is available on the MOD website at the following link:

http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/1EF9A1F7-0C65-4053-820F-8BD386EBD6F1/0/rts_annual_report_2009.pdf

A copy has been placed in the Library of the House.

BAE Systems

Mr Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many employees of BAE Systems were on secondment to his Department on 1 April 2010; and if he will make a statement. [17338]

Mr Robathan: The information requested is not held centrally and will take some time to collate. I shall write to the hon. Member with a substantive answer as soon as one is available.

Substantive answer from Andrew Robathan to Douglas Carswell:

In my written reply of 15 November 2010, I advised you that I would write to you with a substantive answer to your question on secondees from BAE Systems as soon as possible.

Secondments, whether inward or outward, are full or part-time development activity, usually involving a private sector organisation or charity. They are normally used to develop individuals and can enable the business to introduce different perspectives and expertise. Inward secondments from the private sector or charities cannot exceed two years in duration.

As at April 2010, there were 40 individuals on inward secondment to the MOD from various organisations in the public and private sector. Ten of these were employees of BAE Systems. In addition, two BAE Systems employees are engaged to provide external assistance with tasks in the Defence Intelligence Staff. Air Command has a number of BAE Systems employees conducting depth servicing at Marham, Cottesmore, and Kinloss. The numbers vary.

Since May 2010, inward secondments from the private sector and charities have been banned as part of civil service-wide controls on external recruitment.

I am sorry for the delay in providing this response.

Departmental Buildings

Matthew Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much office space per employee his Department occupied in each year since 1997. [1300

Mr Gerald Howarth: Data on how much office space per employee the department occupied prior to 2007 is not held. Since April 2008, the Ministry of Defence in common with all other central Government Departments has participated in the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Property Benchmarking Service, which captures office space utilisation of occupied offices that have a net internal area over 500 metres . This information is shown in the following table:

	2007-08	*2008-0*
Number of buildings benchmarked	21	2
Total occupied space (square metres)	259,796	272,6
Space per member of full-time equivalent staff (square metres)	13.6	13

Data for 2009-10 is currently undergoing validation I will write to my hon. Friend when this data is available

Substantive answer from Andrew Robathan to Matthew Hancock:

In my answer of 6 September 2010, *Official Report*, column 162W, I undertook to write to you with data on office space per employee the Ministry of Defence occupied in 2009-10 when these figures had been validated.

The data is now available and is shown in the following table

	Number of buildings benchmarked	*Total occupied space (m*	*Space p member of fu time equival staff (m*
2009-10	22	278,601	13

The overall space efficiency (m^2/FTE) now stands at 13.6m an increase of 0.5m^2/since last year and this has largely been the result of streamlining and staff relocations to other sites. Currently 35% of the occupied space is less than 12m^2/FTE with 52% of the offices have either remained the same or improved their m^2/FTE balance from last year.

Fleet Air Arm

Dr Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* flying and *(b)* non-flying personnel of the Fleet Air Arm he expects to be made redundant as a result of the ending of the Harrier capability; how many have served more than (i) 10, (ii) 12, (iii) 14 and (iv) 15 years; and if he will make a statement. [32155]

Peter Luff: I refer the hon. Member to the answer the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, my hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr Robathan), gave on 16 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 897-98W. Work is ongoing between the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force to determine how best to meet the requirement to re-generate a Carrier Strike capability in 2020. Until this work is complete, the information requested will not be known.

Military Aircraft

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many transport aircraft are being leased by his Department; [32314]

(2) what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of leasing transport aircraft of each type *(a)* in total and *(b)* per flight hour in each of the last six years. [32338]

Peter Luff: I will write to the hon. Member shortly.

Navy

Dr Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department plans to take to mark the 100th anniversary of fixed-wing flying in the Royal Navy; and if he will make a statement. [32156]

Peter Luff: The hon. Member will be aware of the events held throughout 2009 to mark the centenary of the Admiralty's first order for an aircraft, acknowledged as the commencement of naval aviation. The Royal Navy plan to mark the 100th anniversary of fixed wing flying by an event in May 2011 at Eastchurch Airfield on the Isle of Sheppey, the location of the first Royal Navy fixed wing flight.

North East England

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which Ministers of his Department have visited the North East since their appointment; and what the *(a)* date and *(b)* purpose was of each such visit. [31784]

Peter Luff: No Minister in the Ministry of Defence (MOD) has visited the north-east since their appointment to represent the MOD in an official capacity.

North Korea

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the military threat posed by North Korea to UK interests across the world. [32264]

Peter Luff: North Korea's artillery attack on Yeonpyeong Island in November 2010 raised tensions and threatened stability in North East Asia, a region of the world that is central to the UK's economic and trade interests. North Korea's ongoing nuclear weapon, ballistic missile and proliferation activities, which contravene UN and EU sanctions, pose significant risks to international security. Long-term stability on the Korean peninsula will be achieved only through the complete and verifiable denuclearisation of North Korea.

Rescue Services: Helicopters

Mr Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what consultation he expects to have with representatives of the Fire and Rescue Service as part of his Department's review of proposals for helicopter search and rescue under the private finance initiative; and if he will make a statement. [31571]

Peter Luff: UK Fire and Rescue Services are represented on both the UK Search and Rescue (SAR) Strategic Committee and the UK SAR Operators Group. The aim of both is to provide a management framework within which the responsible parties can work together to ensure the continued provision of an effective national SAR capability. Both the Strategic Committee and the Operators Group have been briefed on the review and will be updated on the outcome of the review in due course.

Sri Lanka

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when his forthcoming visit to Sri Lanka is to *(a)* begin and *(b)* end; [32067]

(2) if he will place in the Library and on his Department's website a copy of *(a)* each speech made by him during and *(b)* the itinerary of his proposed visit to Sri Lanka. [32071]

Dr Fox: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave on 20 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 993W.

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make representations to the Sri Lankan Government on the allegations of extra-judicial killings in Sri Lanka made in the course of recent television broadcasts during his proposed visit. [32068]

Dr Fox: I take every opportunity to raise concerns about human rights issues with the Government of Sri Lanka and will continue to do so.

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what meetings have taken place between *(a)* Ministers in his Department, *(b)* officials in his Department and *(c)* members of the armed forces and their counterparts in Sri Lanka since 11 May 2010. [32069]

Dr Fox: Ministry of Defence officials and members of the armed forces have had the following engagement:

An Army Lieutenant Colonel responsible for UK accredited Defence Attaches and the Official overseeing Defence Relations policy provided an introductory brief for the incoming Sri Lankan Defence Adviser to the UK in November.

The Commander Task Force Iraqi Maritime, a Royal Navy Commodore, provided Defence representation at the inauguration of the Sri Lankan President in November.

The Commander Amphibious Task Group, a Royal Navy Commodore, represented the Royal Navy at the Sri Lankan Navy's 60th Anniversary celebrations in Colombo in December.

I met with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister in June and October, and also when I saw the president in December, although the latter was in a private capacity.

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much was spent under each budget heading *(a)* on his proposed visit to Sri Lanka and *(b)* the preparations for it. [32070]

Dr Fox: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave on 20 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 993W.

Mr Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who wrote the speech he plans to deliver during his visit to Sri Lanka commencing on 18 December 2010. [32158]

Dr Fox: I have postponed my private visit to Sri Lanka due to an extended scheduled official visit to the Gulf. I intend to carry out an official visit to Sri Lanka in the course of next year. At the time the visit was postponed, I had not yet prepared my speech.

Mr Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether any *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers were involved in (i) preparation of the itinerary and (ii) other arrangements for his visit to Sri Lanka commencing on 18 December 2010. [32159]

Dr Fox: No.

Mr Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many visits he has made to Sri Lanka in an official capacity since his appointment. [32160]

Dr Fox: I have not yet made a visit to Sri Lanka since taking up office, but intend to carry out an official visit in the course of next year.

Strategic Defence and Security Review

Mr Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff of his Department were assigned to work on the Strategic Defence and Security Review consultation process. [31464]

Peter Luff *[holding answer 20 December 2010]*: The Ministry of Defence had around 10 members of staff working on the strategic defence and security review consultation process: the team also drew on resources elsewhere in the Department as necessary.

Mr Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what external contracts his Department commissioned as part of the Strategic Defence and Security Review consultation process. [31465]

Peter Luff *[holding answer 20 December 2010]*: As part of the strategic defence and security review consultation process the Department contracted the Security and Defence Agenda to facilitate a discussion with EU and NATO allies. The cost of the contract was approximately £7,000.

Type 26 Frigate

Dr Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made on developing the design of the Type 26 frigate; to what extent this will be *(a)* flexible, *(b)* modular and *(c)* competitively-priced; and if he will make a statement. [32154]

Peter Luff: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 4 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 960W. We will continue to develop the design and ensure the solution delivers value for money.

Unmanned Air Vehicles

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the correspondence address is of each supplier of *(a)* equipment, *(b)* personnel, *(c)* parts and *(d)* assembly facilities for the production of unmanned aerial vehicles of each (i) type, (ii) range, (iii) capital and maintenance cost and (iv) lifespan in each (A) Government office region, (B) local authority area and (C) Parliamentary constituency. [28166]

Peter Luff: I will write to the hon. Member in due course.

Substantive answer from Peter Luff to Bridget Phillipson:

I undertook to write to you in answer to your Parliamentary Question on 6 December 2010 (Official Report, column 10W) about the range, costs and lifespan of each Unmanned Air System (UAS) type and the correspondence address of our suppliers, and your similar Parliamentary Questions on 14 December 2010 (Official Report, column 714W) about Vanguard and Astute submarines, the Long Range Rifle and the SA80A2 Individual Weapon. The information held by the Ministry of Defence is shown in the tables at Annexes A-D to this letter. A copy will also be placed in the Library of the House.

I note that you have previously asked a number of defence procurement questions about specific equipment platforms, each time requesting the answers to be categorised by Government office region, local authority area and Parliamentary constituency. My concern is that collating this information is incredibly time consuming and expensive for the Department and sometimes, in the case of contracts with foreign companies, close to impossible. Of course I am anxious to help colleagues by being as open as possible and giving thorough answers to PQs, but I just wondered whether there was a wider defence procurement question that you would like us to address more holistically, rather than by this piecemeal and resource intensive approach. Please let me know if this might be the case. Perhaps you would like to come and see me in the New Year so we can discuss this in more details?

PRIME MINISTER

Cabinet Manual

Mr Blunkett: To ask the Prime Minister what the status is of the draft Cabinet Manual published by the Cabinet Secretary; whether he plans the manual to be *(a)* laid before and *(b)* debated by the House; and if he will make a statement. [32076]

The Prime Minister: I refer the right hon. Member to the written ministerial statement where I laid the draft manual before the House on 14 December 2010. The House of Commons can decide to debate the draft manual if it wishes.

Departmental Press: Subscriptions

Robert Halfon: To ask the Prime Minister how much the Prime Minister's Office spent on press cuttings services in each year since 1997. [28159]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, my right hon. Friend the Member for Horsham (Mr Maude) on 20 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 1058W.

European Financial Stability Mechanism

Mr Cash: To ask the Prime Minister what his policy is on holding a referendum in respect of *(a)* extending the use of the European Financial Stability Mechanism to a member state other than the Republic of Ireland up to the expiry of the mechanism in 2013 and *(b)* any similar proposals made by the EU whether or not they are permanent; and whether such proposals involve the agreement of a treaty between the member states. [32218]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the statement I made on 20 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 1187, and to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Harwich and North Essex (Mr Jenkin) on 20 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 1196.

Libya: Oil

Robert Halfon: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answers of 6 September 2010, *Official Report*, column 2W and 2 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 681W, on BP: Libya and oil rigs in Libya, when he expects the Cabinet Secretary to report on his findings. [30878]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further add to the answers I gave on 6 September 2010, *Official Report*, column 2W, and 2 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 681W.

Transfer of Questions

Ian Austin: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 448W, on transfer of questions, for what reason question 28072, on discussions between the Prime Minister and Mayor of London, directly pursuant to the Prime Minister's response to the hon. Member for Bosworth on 24 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 257, was transferred for answer by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. [32215]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 448W.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps she plans to take to tackle antisocial behaviour among young people in Hendon constituency; and what progress she has made on providing tools to the police to deal with antisocial behaviour. [31527]

James Brokenshire: Antisocial behaviour is unacceptable, whether it is committed by adults or young people. The response must be local, with the professionals and communities working together to tackle it. The Home Secretary has been clear that dealing with the problem should be core business for the police and other local agencies.

The Government will ensure the right tools and powers are available to crack down fast on perpetrators, and our plans to make police more accountable through elected police and crime commissioners will put communities at the heart of the solution.

The Home Office has been reviewing the tools and powers available to tackle antisocial behaviour, and we will be consulting on proposals from January to April 2011.

Asylum

Ms Bagshawe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for reunification with a minor, spouse or partner in the UK were accepted from applicants who had been granted or had applied for asylum in another EU member state in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and how many such applications were made by people resident in each region in each such year. [32175]

Damian Green: We are unable to identify from central records people who have been issued with family reunion visas who had themselves been granted or applied for asylum in an EU State or any other third country. We could only produce the information requested by checking individual records at disproportionate cost.

Ms Bagshawe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many asylum seekers were resident in each *(a)* region and *(b)* local authority area in each of the last three years for which figures are available; [32176]

(2) how many asylum seekers whose claims for asylum had been rejected were resident in each *(a)* region and *(b)* local authority area in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [32177]

Damian Green: The UK Border Agency does not maintain data on the numbers of asylum applicants living in any given area at any given time. To obtain such information for previous years would involve considerable work going back through the case working database, at disproportionate cost. We have provided figures for the numbers of asylum applicants living in each region and local authority area as of 17 December 2010.

A breakdown of the number of asylum applicants living in, and those whose claims have been rejected in, *(a)* each region and *(b)* each local authority has been placed on the Library of the House.

The asylum claims included are those made since 2006 and managed within regions, under the new asylum model (NAM).

Blue Blindfold Campaign

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if her Department will *(a)* commission and *(b)* publish the conclusions of an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of (i) the Blue Blindfold campaign and (ii) other prevention activities funded by her Department. [31519]

Damian Green: There are no plans to commission an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Blue Blindfold campaign.

Borders: Personal Records

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions she has had on the compatibility with EU law of the implementation of the e-Borders programme. [31236]

Damian Green: The European Commission wrote to the UK on 17 December 2009 giving its opinion on the complaint raised by the British Chamber of Shipping and their French counterparts regarding e-Borders compatibility with EU law on free movement and data protection.

In respect of data protection, the European Commission agreed that it is legal for carriers to collect advance passenger information (API) on EU routes and for this to be transmitted to the UK, subject to the approval of each member state's data protection authority. Officials continue to work closely with individual member state data protection authorities to secure acknowledgement that law enforcement and the fight against terrorism, smuggling and other offences constitute a public and legitimate interest for the purposes of the data protection directive, so that API data can be transmitted.

In respect of free movement, UK and Commission officials have, since the December 2009 letter, been working together to reach a mutual understanding of how e-Borders operates in a way that strengthens the security of the UK and the EU more broadly but does not have an impact on free movement. We believe that those discussions with the Commission are close to being concluded, and once a final position has been reached we will fully explore any implications with the industry.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether her Department plans to seek compensation from Raytheon Systems Ltd following the termination of its contract for the delivery of the e-Borders programme. [32293]

Damian Green: The Home Office is pursuing its remedies under the contract and the matter is now subject to a confidential arbitration under the jurisdiction of the London Court of International Arbitration.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the likely role of the UK Border Agency in project integration for the e-Borders programme. [32294]

Damian Green: The e-Borders programme is within the UK Border Agency's remit and it will have overall responsibility for programme integration issues. These are managed through established governance arrangements within the Agency.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether she plans to seek a single supplier or more than one supplier of services for the e-Borders programme; [32295]

(2) by what date she expects new contracts for the delivery of the e-Borders programme to be in place with suppliers; [32296]

(3) what procurement process her Department plans to follow to secure new suppliers for the e-Borders programme. [32297]

Damian Green: Since the e-Borders contract with Raytheon Systems was terminated, the e-Borders programme has been pursuing a strategy to procure services to replace those due under the original contract. We continue to engage with a number of alternative providers to deliver the key benefits that the contract with Raytheon was unable to deliver. No new contracts have yet been agreed. The Programme remains on course to meet the Home Office Business plan target to agree a contract with new suppliers and transition existing services from Raytheon Systems Ltd by April 2011.

The Department will procure through existing and accessible contract vehicles where demonstrable value for money can be achieved.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when she expects to finalise the budget for the e-Borders programme. [32298]

Damian Green: The budget for the e-Borders programme has now been decided following the spending review. For commercial reasons, we are unable to disclose this figure.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which e-Borders contracts have been novated from Raytheon Systems to her Department and its agencies. [32300]

Damian Green: The contract with IBM for the Semaphore system was novated to UKBA on 25 November 2010.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role an authority to carry function will have in the e-Borders programme. [32301]

Damian Green: The Government are committed to making changes to pre-flight checks to identify people who pose a potential terrorist threat and prevent those who pose a severe terrorist threat from flying into and out of the UK. e-Borders will provide the capability to deliver an automated authority to carry function in due course.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the potential for the use of off-the-shelf technologies in the e-Borders programme. [32302]

Damian Green: Since the e-Borders contract with Raytheon Systems was terminated on 22 July 2010, the e-Borders programme has been pursuing a strategy to procure services to replace those due under the original contract. We are engaging with alternative providers to deliver the key benefits that the contract with Raytheon was unable to deliver.

As requirements have been discussed with suppliers, we have reviewed their proposals for how they propose to deliver the programme, and this includes off-the-shelf technologies as appropriate.

Cybercrime

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate she has made of the level of internet *(a)* crime and *(b)* fraud in the UK; what steps (i) her Department and (ii) agencies for which she is responsible are taking to reduce such levels; and if she will make a statement. [31855]

James Brokenshire: The National Security Strategy published in October 2010 clearly stated that cyber threats, including cyber crime, are one of the top four threats facing the UK. In response, the strategic defence and security review allocated £650 million to help protect the UK's interests in cyber space through a national cyber security programme.

As part of this, the Government will deliver an effective response to cyber crime through a national Cyber Crime Strategy. This will set out how we believe the UK can tackle cyber crime. We intend to publish this in early 2011.

Demonstrations: City of Westminster

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what reports she has received from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) on the estimated *(a)* cost of damage caused and *(b)* number of criminal offences committed in the course of the demonstration in London on 9 December 2010; how many arrests were made; how many people were stopped and searched in connection with the demonstration; what the cost to the MPS was of policing the demonstration; what the policy of the MPS is on recovering policing costs from organisers of demonstrations; what the cost of providing facilities to the demonstrators was; and if she will make a statement. [30827]

James Brokenshire: I refer my hon. Friend to the statement the Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) gave to the House on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 665-66, on public disorder at the protest against tuition fees on 9 December 2010. As at 21 December 2010, 52 people have been arrested by the Metropolitan police for offences including public order and criminal damage. The Home Office does not hold information on the number of criminal offences committed, number of stop and searches, the cost of the damage caused, policing costs or the cost of providing facilities to demonstrators.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what recent discussions she *(a)* has had and *(b)* plans to have with the Metropolitan police service on the use of (i) water cannon, (ii) plastic bullets and (iii) CS gas at demonstrations; and if she will make a statement; [31358]

(2) how many *(a)* water cannon, *(b)* plastic bullets and *(c)* units of CS gas are held by her Department and its agencies; whether she has plans for future procurement of such items; and if she will make a statement. [31359]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office has regular discussions with the Metropolitan police service on a range of policing issues including the use of equipment in public order scenarios. I refer the hon. Member to the statement the Secretary of State for the Home Department gave to the House on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 665-69.

Water cannon is not approved for police use in England and Wales. The Home Office and its agencies do not hold any water cannon for operational use in England and Wales.

The Home Office and its agencies do not hold any plastic bullets, nor are these approved for police use in England and Wales. The use of attenuating energy projectile (AEP) rounds and CS spray are approved for use by the police service in England and Wales in accordance with the Association of Chief Police Officers guidance. The Home Office does not centrally hold any information on the number of AEP rounds and CS spray held by police forces. We have no plans to procure such equipment.

Joseph Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of the clean-up operation following the disturbances in central London on 9 December 2010; [31647]

(2) what estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of policing the demonstrations in central London on 9 December 2010. [31648]

Nick Herbert: The Home Office does not hold this information.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of the demonstration in Parliament square on 9 December 2010; and if she will make a statement; [31657]

(2) what estimate she has made of the cost of police officer overtime incurred in policing the demonstration in Parliament square on 9 December 2010; and if she will make a statement; [31658]

(3) if she will commission a report from the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis on the number of police officers of each *(a)* rank and *(b)* police force who were (i) injured and (ii) seriously injured while policing the demonstration in Parliament square on 9 December 2010; and if she will make a statement; [31659]

(4) if she will commission a report from the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis on the policing of the demonstration in Parliament square on 9 December 2010; how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women in each age group were arrested; on what grounds each was arrested; and if she will make a statement; [31704]

(5) what representations she has received from the organisers of the demonstration in Parliament square on 9 December 2010 since 10 December; and if she will make a statement. [31707]

James Brokenshire: The Home Office does not hold information on the costs of the demonstration or costs of police overtime. The commissioner has informed the Home Secretary that at least 30 officers were injured and that six of those required hospital treatment all of whom have now been discharged. The Home Office does not hold information on the rank of officers who were injured and does not plan to commission a report.

The Metropolitan police provided information to the Home Office that 52 people had been arrested as of 21 December. There are no plans to commission reports from the commissioner of police for the Metropolis on the gender of those arrested.

The Home Secretary received a letter on 14 December from the University and College Union requesting a public inquiry into police actions at recent demonstrations.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps she *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to protect buildings leased by her Department from damage during demonstrations; and if she will make a statement. [31703]

James Brokenshire: The Home Office has plans to respond to a range of situations and threats to the physical security of our buildings. These are reviewed and updated as necessary following assessments of the threats we face and from experience gained from demonstrations that have affected government and other public buildings. Our planning is carried out in consultation with the police.

Demonstrations: Riot Control Weapons

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her policy is on the use of water cannon in policing demonstrations in London. [31932]

Nick Herbert: I refer the hon. Member to the statement the Secretary of State for the Home Department gave to the House on 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 668-69. Water cannon is not approved for police use in England and Wales.

Demonstrations: Whitehall

Diana Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her policy is on requiring reports from police forces on incidents of public disorder; and whether she has requested a report from the Metropolitan police on the policing of the demonstration in Whitehall on 9 December 2010. [31957]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 20 December 2010]*: The Home Office requests information on public disorder in order to respond to public and parliamentary interest and to support the development of Government policy. We received a short report from the Metropolitan police about the policing of the demonstration on 9 December.

Departmental Press Releases

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions her Department has provided embargoed media briefings prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010; in respect of how many such briefings her Department was informed that the embargo had been breached; what steps were taken as a result of each such breach; and on how many occasions her Department has provided media briefings without an embargo prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010. [31923]

James Brokenshire: Nine formal media briefings have been held in the Home Office since 26 May 2010. Of these only two were embargoed and in neither case was the embargo breached.

On one occasion on 28 June, in an attempt by the Home Secretary to assist the House by changing from making a written ministerial statement to making an oral statement, the copy of the statement that would have been made in writing to the House was handed out to the press before the oral statement was made.

Briefings would never normally be held in advance of an oral statement without an embargo.

Departmental Utilities

Mrs Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of the *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas supplied to her Department's offices at Lunar house, Croydon, in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; and how many members of staff are based at those offices. [31666]

Nick Herbert: From available records the following table displays payments made on electricity and gas for Lunar house since November 2009.

		£
	Gas	*Electricity*
November 2009	313.77	52,781.97
December 2009	280.13	49,397.30
January 2010	313.12	42,686.74
February 2010	296.06	39,793.14
March 2010	297.73	43,510.65
April 2010	236.59	42,791.77
May 2010	262.30	49,890.99
June 2010	244.15	51,589.18
July 2010	256.91	57,194.49
August 2010	264.95	52,511.62
September 2010	254.22	48,224.71
October 2010	303.32	44,513.44
Total	3,323.25	574,886.00

The number of staff based at Lunar house is around 2,200.

Deportation

Mrs Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information about families the UK Border Agency considers before a decision is made on *(a)* removal and *(b)* participation in family return pilots. [31882]

Damian Green: All applicants, including families, whose application has been fully considered and all avenues of appeal have been exhausted will be considered for removal by the UK Border Agency. Chapter 45 of the Enforcement Instructions and Guidance provides comprehensive guidance to staff on how family units who include dependant children (aged under 18), who are liable to be removed, should be progressed through to removal. Chapter 45 of the Enforcement Instructions and Guidance can be found at:

http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/enforcement/oemsectione/

Family removals, and especially those involving children, are a particularly sensitive area of work. Family dynamics will vary from one family group to the next, and guidance and training is provided to UKBA staff to ensure that properly informed consideration can be made on how best to plan to meet any specific needs during each stage of any enforcement action leading to removal.

I made a statement to the House on 16 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 125-26WS, which announced the Government's plans to end the detention of children for immigration purposes, outlining the new family process and how this is being piloted. An interim assessment of the pilots has been carried out and we expect to publish this in the new year.

Mrs Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many pilot schemes for alternative methods of removing families undertaken by the UK Border Agency are based in *(a)* the North West, *(b)* London and *(c)* other parts of the UK. [31883]

Damian Green: On 1 June 2010 the UK Border Agency began a review into ending the detention of children for immigration purposes. Over the past few months, the UK Border Agency have been working closely with partners and testing out new approaches with our pilots in the North West and London to find a new way of working with families and to build confidence in the system. The review report was published on 16 December 2010. A further pilot is running in Glasgow, in conjunction with Glasgow city council. This was launched in June 2009.

Domestic Violence: Finance

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with reference to her Department's announcement of 24 November 2010 on funding for specialist services to tackle violence against women and girls, under what budget headings the £28 million funding will be allocated in each year of the Comprehensive Spending Review period. [31260]

Lynne Featherstone: The Government have allocated £28 million to provide stable funding to support specialist services to tackle violence against women and girls over the comprehensive spending review period.

The budget headings the money will be allocated under are: interpersonal violence (IPV) local funding, independent sexual violence advisor (ISVA) services, domestic violence (DV) third sector funding and the forced marriage unit.

The Government will also continue central funding for the quality assurance of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) and training places for Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (IDVAS) and MARAC co-ordinators to ensure there is a consistent delivery of service nationally.

Domestic Violence: Teachers

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will hold discussions with the Secretary of State for Education on training teachers to *(a)* teach on issues relating to and *(b)* identify young people who may be affected by domestic violence. [31865]

Lynne Featherstone: Ministerial discussions on issues relating to domestic violence normally take place at the Inter-Ministerial Group on Violence Against Women and Girls which is attended by both Home Office and Education Ministers (as well as others). A meeting with the Secretary of State for Education, the right hon. Member for Surrey Heath (Michael Gove), will be planned for the new year to discuss how to pursue the teaching of consent and healthy relationships in schools.

Entry Clearances: Overseas Students

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what proportion of foreign students entering the UK under the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies and General Student Visa system have overstayed; and what proportion of such students were sponsored by *(a)* English language centres and *(b)* universities. [31391]

Damian Green: The UK Border Agency is not able to provide the information requested. The e-Borders system enables checks to be made on individuals arriving or exiting the country at a majority of the points of entry to the UK but is not yet fully rolled out.

The Government are committed to ensuring that the number of UK ports undertaking exit checks is increased to ensure a complete travel history record on all passengers.

While in the UK the licensed sponsor is required to monitor the student's attendance and progress and must report any issues of non-compliance to the UK Border Agency. These reports are monitored by the UK Border Agency and action taken against both the student and sponsor, where appropriate.

The Government are currently reviewing the student immigration system and a public consultation opened on 7 December.

Firearms

Mr Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding she has allocated to programmes designed to tackle *(a)* illegal firearms, *(b)* narcotics and *(c)* human trafficking in each of the last five years. [19910]

James Brokenshire *[holding answer 27 October 2010]*: Direct Home Office funding for specific programmes to tackle drug use is set out in the following table:

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	£ million 2010-11
Drug Interventions Programme[1]	177	152	153	149	142
Young People's Substance Misuse[2]	18.5	14.9			
FRANK[3]	5.06	2.32	2.67	1.74	
Drug Strategy Delivery[4]	0.705	1.04	1.1	1.23	1.28
Pompidou Group[5]	0.158	0.178	0.194	0.2	
Overseas drug-related assistance[6]	5	3			
Positive Futures programme[7]	5.8	6	6	5.96	6
YOT named drug worker[8]	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5

[1] Funding for delivery of the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP), includes grants to local areas, grants and costs for drug testing and for the programme's information systems.

[2] Grant funding to local areas to deliver substance misuse services for young people. From 2008-09 this funding went into a wider unringfenced grant now known as the Area Based Grant.

[3] FRANK provides free and confidential help, information and advice about any aspect of drugs. It is delivered 24 hours a day all year round via a helpline or via the following link
www.talktofrank.com
The 'FRANK' campaign operates in England and primarily targets young people aged 11 to 18-years-old, parents are also an important audience FRANK is jointly funded by Home Office, Department of Health and Department for Education. Figures refer to the Home Office contribution only and include costs for marketing campaigns and materials for stakeholders working directly with young people.¶Due to the cross-Government freeze on marketing and advertising, there has been no expenditure in 2010-11.

[4] Grant funding for a range of projects which supported delivery of the Drug Strategy in terms of developing innovation and best practice.

[5] Funding of the UK's membership subscription between 2006-07 to 2009-10 to the Council of Europe Pompidou Group, which is a forum for exchanging views and information on good practice and studies relating broadly to drugs-related demand reduction and its associated harm.

[6] Contribution to the Government's counter-narcotic work in Afghanistan.

[7] Positive Futures programme provides grants to local prevention projects that target vulnerable and at risk 10 to 19-year-olds aiming to stop them from becoming drawn into crime and substance misuse and supporting them in moving forward with their lives.

[8] Funding to provide a named drugs worker in every Youth Offending Team in England and Wales.

Human Trafficking

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with reference to her Department's Update to the UK Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking, October 2009, what progress has been made in respect of each of the eight action points on prevention. [31640]

Damian Green: Since publication of the UK Action Plan update in October 2009, the UK:

has produced an up to date estimate of the scale of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the off-street market in England and Wales;

is developing intelligence-led work overseas in countries and regions which pose the greatest threat, through the Serious Organised Crime Agency and the UK Human Trafficking Centre;

continues to play an active role in helping improve wider EU efforts at combating human trafficking and works constructively with its European partners on issues of mutual interest. Activity has included helping to ensure human trafficking is a key area under the Stockholm Programme which sets out the EU's Justice and Home Affairs priorities for 2010 to 2014 and contributing to plans to strengthen the EU's response to trafficking from outside the EU;

worked with a range of countries to support anti-trafficking projects that address vulnerabilities to trafficking; and

has designated 18 October as Anti Slavery Day in England and Wales to provide a focal point for the awareness-raising work of the voluntary sector.

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet representatives of Anti-Slavery International for the purpose of informing her policy on *(a)* human trafficking globally and *(b)* the new European Directive on Human Trafficking. [32004]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Fiona Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions she has had with her international counterparts on co-ordination of efforts to *(a)* raise public awareness of and *(b)* prevent human trafficking. [32117]

Damian Green: The Government recognise the importance of international collaboration in raising awareness of and preventing human trafficking.

The Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), and I held a meeting with the UNHCR High Commissioner, Antonio Guterres, at which human trafficking was discussed. I also recently met the Afghan Minister for Refugees and Repatriation, Dr Jamaher Anwary, to discuss the issue of trafficking.

The Government have focused their international efforts through the European Union and other regional organisations such as the Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will meet representatives of STOP UK to discuss the content of her proposed new policy on addressing human trafficking before she concludes it. [32396]

Damian Green: The voluntary sector plays a key role in the identification of, and provision of support to, victims of human trafficking. We are strongly supportive of this role and will continue to work in partnership with voluntary organisations to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

Home Office officials will shortly be contacting non-governmental organisations to discuss development of the forthcoming strategy on human trafficking.

Human Trafficking: Children

Margot James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the child trafficking cases referred under the National Referral Mechanism since its establishment *(a)* were referred to the police for further investigation with regard to human trafficking and *(b)* led to prosecutions by the Crown Prosecution Service. [30875]

Damian Green: The purpose of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is to allow agencies involved in victim support and identification to share information to identify, assess and support victims of trafficking. Separate arrangements exist for sharing information with the police.

It is not therefore possible to state how many child trafficking cases referred under the NRM, were forwarded to the police and led to prosecutions by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether her Department plans to introduce an operation to tackle the trafficking of children following the end of Operation Golf in December 2010. [31082]

Damian Green: The Government are committed to publishing a new human trafficking strategy early next year which will set out how improvements can be made in tackling human trafficking through greater upstream enforcement, multi-agency action at the border and greater co-ordination of our policing effort within the UK.

There are currently no plans to introduce an operation specifically aimed at tackling child trafficking after the end of Operation Golf in December of this year. Tackling human trafficking is however a core part of policing business.

Illegal Immigrants

Stephen Phillips: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the average period between the date of *(a)* entry and *(b)* deportation of those deported following illegal entry to the UK in each of the last five years. [31671]

Damian Green: We have assumed 'deportation' to mean the removal of an individual who has been served with enforcement papers.

The UK Border Agency (UKBA) does not capture the period between the date of entry and date of removal for illegal entrants because it is not possible to accurately determine when someone illegally entered the UK.

Stephen Phillips: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much her Department has spent on *(a)* legal costs in connection with illegal immigrants and *(b)* housing and maintenance for those who entered the UK illegally prior to deportation in each of the last five years. [31672]

Damian Green: We are unable to provide figures for these costs since the Department does not collate data in the way requested and such information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Illegal Immigrants: Fines

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what proportion of civil penalties issued for carrying stowaways to *(a)* UK-registered haulage firms and *(b)* drivers employed by UK-registered haulage firms have been collected since 2000; [30389]

(2) what proportion of civil penalties issued for carrying stowaways to *(a)* non-UK-registered haulage firms and *(b)* drivers employed by non-UK-registered haulage firms have been collected since 2000. [30390]

Damian Green *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: The database for recording the haulier civil penalty cases started on 8 December 2002. From 8 December 2002 to 17 December 2010 the proportion of civil penalties issued for carrying clandestines has been:

(a) haulage firm 80%

(b) drivers employed by haulage firms 20%

We are unable to distinguish between the UK-registered haulage firms and non-UK registered haulage firms or driver. The proportion of penalties collected from drivers and haulage firms between 8 December 2002 to 17 December 2010 is 72%.

Immigration Controls

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will assess the merits of restricting the number of visas which provide a route to settlement. [31868]

Damian Green *[holding answer 20 December 2010]*: It is the Government's aim to reduce levels of net migration. We have announced that we will take action across all routes to achieve this.

The primary economic categories leading to settlement are skilled and highly-skilled migrants. We have already taken steps to limit the number of these migrants entering the UK from April next year.

Furthermore we have announced that we will end the link between temporary and permanent migration and as a first step we will introduce some new criteria for those who apply for settlement from April 2011.

I intend to consider what further reforms are appropriate on all migration routes which currently confer a right to apply for settlement, and will make further announcements in due course.

Members: Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when she plans to respond to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 9 November 2010 with regard to Ms N Ahmed. [32225]

Nick Herbert: I apologise for the delay in replying. The Minister of State for Security and Counter-Terrorism, my noble Friend, Baroness Neville-Jones, replied on 17 December 2010. A copy of the letter will be placed in the House Library.

North East (England)

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which Ministers of her Department have visited the North East since their appointment; and what the *(a)* date and *(b)* purpose was of each such visit. [31786]

James Brokenshire: I visited Rothbury and Northumbria police headquarters on 19 July 2010 in response to the Raoul Moat shootings.

Olympic Games 2012: Kent Constabulary

Gareth Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans she has to provide additional funding to Kent police for its responsibilities for the London 2012 Olympics. [31983]

Nick Herbert: As no 2012 Olympic or Paralympic events are scheduled to take place in Kent, there are no plans to provide additional funding for Kent police.

Police: Expenditure

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of police force expenditure was spent on *(a)* police officer, *(b)* police community support officer and *(c)* other staffing costs in the latest period for which figures are available. [31503]

Mrs May *[holding answer 20 December 2010]:* The information requested is shown in the following table:

	Gross revenue expenditure in 2009-10 (£ million)	*Percentage of total*
Police officer pay bill	7,880	56.06
Police community support officer pay bill	515	3.66
Other staffing costs (including pay bill of police staff)	2,934	20.87
Total	14,057	—

Source: Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy: http://www.tisonline.net/
2009/10 actuals.

Police: Manpower

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* police officers, *(b)* police community support officers and *(c)* other staff are employed by each specialist national police unit. [26078]

Mrs May *[holding answer 23 November 2010]:* 'Specialist national police unit' is not a term used by the Home Office.

Police: Sick Leave

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what proportion of *(a)* police community support officers and *(b)* police officers in (i) the Metropolitan police service and (ii) Cambridgeshire constabulary took sick leave in each of the last three years. [29968]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* Figures are not collected centrally in the form requested. Instead, the following table contains sickness data on the number and proportion of police officers and police community support officers who took sick leave at the end of each financial year ie 31 March. It also shows the total amount of sick leave taken in each financial year by police officers in the Metropolitan police service and Cambridgeshire constabulary. The total amount of sick leave taken by police community support officers is not collected centrally.

Number and proportion of police officers and police community support officers who took sick leave in the Metropolitan Police Service and Cambridgeshire constabulary in each of the last three years[1, 2, 6, 7]

Metropolitan Police Service

	Police officers				*Police community support officers*		
	Total number of police officers[3]	*Number on sick leave*[8]	*Proportion*[5] *(percentage)*	*Sick leave (hours) in 12 months to 31 March*	*Total number of police community support officers*[4]	*Number on sick leave*[8]	Proportion[5] (percentage)
31 March 2008	31,460	1,917	6.1	1,757,619	4,247	307	7.2
31 March 2009	32,610	1,836	5.6	1,727,755	4,594	302	6.6
31 March 2010	33,367	1,398	4.2	1,767,339	4,645	263	5.7

Cambridgeshire constabulary

	Police officers				*Police community support officers*		
	Total number of police officers[3]	*Number on sick leave*[8]	*Proportion*[5] *(percentage)*	*Sick leave (hours) in 12 months to 31 March*	*Total number of police community support officers*[4]	*Number on sick leave*[8]	*Proportion*[5] *(percentage)*
31 March 2008	1,379	83	6.0	113,233	197	0	0.0
31 March 2009	1,450	83	5.7	116,197	195	9	4.4

Cambridgeshire constabulary

	Police officers				*Police community support officers*		
	Total number of police officers[1]	*Number on sick leave*[8]	*Proportion*[5] *(percentage)*	*Sick leave (hours) in 12 months to 31 March*	*Total number of police community support officers*[1]	*Number on sick leave*[8]	*Proportion*[5] *(percentage)*
31 March 2010	1,471	71	4.8	95,316	209	12	5.7

[1] Sick absence includes those that have certified and uncertified sickness.

[2] These tables contain full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

[3] As at 31 March 2008 to 2010. These figures may be seasonal, and so the total on sick leave on 31 March may not be representative of the whole year.

[4] These data are provisional. They have not undergone usual quality assurance practices (including validation with individual police forces), and are therefore supplied for information purposes only.

[5] Proportion is calculated by the total number of sick leave (at the end of period) divided by the total number of staff in post.

[6] Source—Home Office using data received from police forces via the Annual Data Requirement.

[7] Figures for 2009-10 affected by changes in sickness certification guidance: sickness absences of more than 28 days should not be uncertified. The fall in sick leave (at the end of period) have been confirmed by the forces.

[8] Sick leave (at the end of period) includes short, medium and long term sick leave.

Public Houses: Closure

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many public houses closed in the city of Brighton and Hove in *(a)* 2007, *(b)* 2008 and *(c)* 2009. [32386]

James Brokenshire: The number of licences that were surrendered, lapsed, revoked, forfeited, suspended or withdrawn within Brighton and Hove can be found within the attached table.

The full tables are available from the DCMS website by using the following link:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/research_and_statistics/4865.asp

Number of licences surrendered, lapsed, revoked, forfeited, suspended or withdrawn for Brighton and Hove

	Premises licences			*Club premises certificates*		
1 April to 31 March each year	*Surrendered*	*Lapsed*	*Suspended*	*Surrendered*	*Lapsed*	*Withdrawn*
2006-07	0	0	3	0	0	1
2007-08	13	0	0	0	0	0
2008-09	1	0	0	0	0	0
2009-10	13	0	0	2	0	0

	Personal licences			
1 April to 31 March each year	*Surrendered*	*Revoked*	*Forfeited*	*Suspended*
2006-07	0	0	0	0
2007-08	0	0	3	0
2008-09	0	0	0	0
2009-10	0	0	2	0

Public Order Offences

Mr Raab: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were *(a)* arrested and *(b)* charged under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 in (i) 2000, (ii) 2001, (iii) 2002, (iv) 2003, (v) 2004, (vi) 2005, (viii) 2006, (ix) 2007, (x) 2008, (xi) 2009 and (xii) 2010. [30919]

James Brokenshire: The information requested on arrests is not available centrally.

The arrests collection held by the Home Office covers arrests for recorded crime (notifiable offences) only, broken down at a main offence group level, covering categories such as violence against the person and robbery. From these centrally reported categories it is not possible to separately identify offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986.

Data provided by Ministry of Justice on the number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986, England and Wales, from 2000 to 2009 (latest available) can be viewed in the following table. Information on the number of people charged is not available centrally.

The data held by the Ministry of Justice contain information on defendants proceeded against, found guilty and sentenced for criminal offences in England and Wales. No information about the circumstances of each case is held other than that specified in a statute. It is therefore not possible to separately identify those cases in which insulting words or behaviour were used from offences under section 5 of the Public Order Act.

Number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates for offences under the Public Order Act 1986 section 5, England and Wales 2000-09

	Offence description	*Statue*	*Year*	*Proceeded against*
	Total proceedings under Public Order Act 1986, section 5		2000	25,109
			2001	24,384
			2002	24,677
			2003	26,698
			2004	26,824

Number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates for offences under the Public Order Act 1986 section 5, England and Wales 2000-09(1, 2)

	Offence description	*Statue*	*Year*	*Proceeded against*
			2005	26,835
			2006	29,211
			2007	30,933
			2008	28,179
			2009	26,480
	Of which			
125/12	Harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, section 5	2000	24,337
			2001	23,203
			2002	23,502
			2003	25,225
			2004	25,007
			2005	24,684
			2006	26,406
			2007	27,684
			2008	24,871
			2009	22,767
125/58	Racially aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 31 (1)(c) and (5)	2000	772
			2001	1,181
			2002	1,165
			2003	1,376
			2004	1,646
			2005	1,903
			2006	2,409
			2007	2,811
			2008	2,827
			2009	3,152
125/61	Religiously aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 31 (1)(c) and (5)	2000	—
			2001	—
			2002	3
			2003	12
			2004	16
			2005	20
			2006	36
			2007	38
			2008	44
			2009	50
125/63	Racially or religiously aggravated harassment, alarm or distress	Public Order Act 1986, section 5 as amended by Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 31 (1)(c) and (5)	2000	—
			2001	—
			2002	7
			2003	85
			2004	155
			2005	228
			2006	360
			2007	400
			2008	437

Number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates for offences under the Public Order Act 1986 section 5, England and Wales 2000-09[1,2,3]

	Offence description	*Statute*	*Year*	*Proceeded against*
			2009	511

[1] The figures given in the table on court proceedings relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[2] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

[3] Excludes data for Cardiff magistrates court for April, July and August 2008

Source:

Justice Statistics Analytical Services - Ministry of Justice

Rape: Victim Support Schemes

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding her Department provided for *(a)* the prevention and detection and *(b)* provision of support for victims of rape in each year since 2005. [32043]

Lynne Featherstone: Where funding is allocated to tackling rape and sexual violence this includes support for victims.

2005-06: Over £50,000

2006-07: Over £1 million

2007-08: Over £2.1 million

2008-09: Over £2.7 million

2009-10: Over £2.9 million

2010-11: Over £2.7 million

Security: Olympic Games 2012

Damian Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions she has had with her French counterpart in France on policing and security for the London 2012 Olympics; and if she will make a statement. [31872]

Nick Herbert *[holding answer 20 December 2010]*: Home Office Ministers meet regularly with their French counterparts to discuss security issues. No substantive discussions have to date taken place about the security of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. France is one of the UK's closest partners on a range of Government business and we enjoy a close, productive relationship. Ministers and officials will continue to engage regularly and will address this issue as necessary.

Stop the Drift

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with reference to the report by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary entitled Stop the Drift, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the number of steps police and prosecutors are required to take to bring a suspect to justice. [25376]

Nick Herbert: The Government are committed to reforming the criminal justice system. A more efficient and effective system will help cut crime and sharpen the focus on improving outcomes for victims and communities. We will outline our strategy to improve the efficiency of the whole criminal justice system next year. We are already taking steps.

We are returning charging discretion to the police for a wider range of crimes, saving valuable police time, and ensuring prosecutors are focused on more complex and serious offences.

All agencies have a shared and strong incentive to improve efficiency not only within their own area of responsibility, but across the system.

Vetting

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks will continue to be required as part of the application for a licence to grow hemp. [32260]

James Brokenshire: Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks are necessary to ensure that those licensed to possess and cultivate cannabis are of good character, and will continue to be required in the future. This is consistent with the license provisions for all other controlled drugs.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what time-scale she has set for the re-introduction of exit checks. [32292]

Damian Green: Our programme for Government sets out our clear commitment to re-introduce exit checks, which we will do by March 2015, and our clear commitment to e-Borders.

e-Borders already supports our ability to undertake effective checks on passengers leaving the UK. It is already checking in excess of 55% of passenger movements into and out of the UK, with coverage planned to increase in the future. We have announced our intention to review by April 2011 the extent to which e-Borders provides a solution to the reintroduction of exit checks.

Yarl's Wood Detention Centre

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children were held in Yarl's Wood detention centre on the latest date for which figures are available. [32003]

Damian Green: Table 3.7 of the Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary July to September 2010 shows that as at 30 September 2010 there were five children (figure rounded to the nearest 5) detained in Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre.

The Home Office publishes statistics on the number of persons detained solely under Immigration Act powers on a quarterly and annual basis, which are available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office's Research, Development and Statistics website at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration-asylum-stats.html

I made a statement to the House on 16 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 125-26WS, which included the announcement of the immediate closure of Yarl's Wood to children.

CABINET OFFICE

Childbirth

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many births there were in NHS hospitals in each year since 1997. [29280]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many births there were in NHS hospitals in each year since 1997 (29280).

Figures for maternities in NHS hospitals have been compiled from birth registration data. Information on place of birth is provided by the informant at registration rather than by the hospitals themselves. The table below shows the number of maternities in NHS hospitals each year from 1997 to 2009.

Maternities[1] in NHS hospitals, 1997-2009, England and Wales

	Maternities
1997	618,160
1998	612,630
1999	598,898
2000	581,850
2001	572,720
2002	573,839
2003	598,536
2004	615,671
2005	619,285
2006	640,799
2007	659,028
2008	676,680
2009	675,193

[1] The number of maternities refers to women who gave birth to one or more live-born or stillborn children rather than the number of babies born. The number of maternities is therefore less than the total number of live births and stillbirths.

Foreign Nationals

Mr Clappison: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many and what proportion of *(a)* UK nationals, *(b)* people born in the UK, *(c)* foreign nationals, *(d)* non-UK EU nationals and *(e)* non-EU nationals (i) aged over 16 years and (ii) of working age were in employment in the UK in the third quarter of 2010. [31577]

Mr Hurd: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking how many and what proportion of (a) UK nationals, (b) people born in the UK, (c) foreign nationals, (d) non-UK EU nationals and (e) non-EU nationals (i) aged over 16 years and (ii) of working age were in employment in the UK in the third quarter of 2010. (31577)

The requested information is provided in the attached table.

Labour market statistics published in the monthly Labour Market Statistical Bulletin previously described as working age (men aged 16-64 and women aged 16-59) have now been replaced with statistics based on those aged 16-64 for both men and women. Consequently, the estimates provided have been produced on this basis.

Employment levels and rates for people aged 16 and over In employment[1, 2] by nationality and country of birth—Three months ending September 2010: United Kingdom, not seasonally adjusted

Thousands and per cent

	Aged over 16 years									
	UK nationals	Rate	UK born	Rate	Foreign Nationals	Rate	Non-UK EU nationals	Rate	Non-EU nationals	Rate
2010 Q3[1]	26,895*	58	25,408*	59	2,399*	64	1,213*	69	1,186*	59

Employment levels and rates for people aged 16 to 64 in employment[1, 2] by nationality and country of birth—Three months ending September 2010: United Kingdom, not seasonally adjusted

Thousands and per cent

	Aged 16 to 64 years									
	UK nationals	Rate	UK born	Rate	Foreign Nationals	Rate	Non-UK EU nationals	Rate	Non-EU nationals	Rate
2010 Q3[1]	26,067*	71	24,626*	72	2,377*	68	1,204*	76	1,173*	62

[1] Includes self-employed and unpaid family workers.
[2] Excludes those whose nationality was not known.
[3] Men aged 16-64 and women aged 16-59.
[4] Coefficients of Variation have been calculated for the latest period as an indication of the quality of the estimates, as described below.
Guide to Quality
The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of an estimate, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality. The true value is likely to lie within +/- twice the CV—for example, for an estimate of 200 with a CV of 5% we would expect the population total to be within the range 180-220.
Key
* 0 = CV<5% — Statistical Robustness: Estimates are considered precise
** 5 = CV <10% — Statistical Robustness: Estimates are considered reasonably precise
*** 10 = CV <20% — Statistical Robustness: Estimates are considered acceptable
**** CV ? 20% — Statistical Robustness: Estimates are considered too unreliable for practical purposes
CV = Coefficient of Variation
Note
It should be noted that the above estimates exclude people in most types of communal establishment (e.g. hotels, boarding houses, hostels mobile home sites etc.)
Source
Labour Force Survey

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Press Releases

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport on how many occasions his Department has provided embargoed media briefings prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010; in respect of how many such briefings his Department was informed that the embargo had been breached; what steps were taken as a result of each such breach; and on how many occasions his Department has provided media briefings without an embargo prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010. [31914]

John Penrose: No oral statements have been made to the House by Ministers within the Department since 26 May 2010.

Gambling: Advertising

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport whether his Department has made a recent assessment of the effects on children of gambling advertisements; and whether he has assessed the merits of requiring the inclusion of public service warnings in gambling advertisements. [32343]

John Penrose: The Department has not made any recent assessment of the effects on children of gambling advertising, or on the merits of including public service warnings in gambling advertisements. However, the codes of practice on gambling advertising produced by the Committee of Advertising Practice and the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice contain strict controls in relation to gambling advertising and children. For example, adverts must not appeal to children and young people and must not include children or young people or any person who is/appears to be under 25 years old.

Furthermore, the gambling industry's voluntary code for socially responsible advertising requires gambling adverts to display the

www.gambleaware.co.uk

address.

North East England

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport which Ministers of his Department have visited the North East since their appointment; and what the *(a)* date and *(b)* purpose was of each such visit. [31787]

John Penrose: The Secretary of State visited Newcastle on 2 September for the UK Schools Games Opening Ceremony.

Olympic Games 2012

Mr Lammy: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what his timetable is for determining the award of the lease for the Olympic Stadium after the London 2012 Olympics. [32046]

Hugh Robertson: The Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC) is responsible for determining the long-term legacy use of the Olympic Stadium and expects to have reached a settled position by the end of the current financial year.

Public Lending Right Scheme

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what consultation he has undertaken with writers and their representative bodies on proposed changes to the public lending right scheme. [32146]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: We recognise the importance of the public lending right scheme to authors and are committed to working with interested groups as we discuss the details of how the new arrangements will work.

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what estimate he has made of the level of savings that would accrue from altering the arrangements for the administration of the public lending right scheme. [32147]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: The transfer is expected to deliver some moderate back office administrative savings, but their value depends on how the body that takes over the public lending right scheme functions chooses to deliver them. We are not yet in a position to give full details of this.

Mr Ivan Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what plans he has for the future administration of the public lending right scheme. [32148]

Mr Jeremy Hunt: The question of which body takes over the public lending right (PLR) scheme role is subject to ongoing discussions. However PLR payments will still be administered by a body operating at arm's length from Government with the same independence and impartiality currently awarded to the PLR Registrar. Furthermore, as a condition of the transfer, the body will be required to commit to ring fence the fund for making payments to authors.

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Miss Begg: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what steps his Department is taking to implement its obligations arising from Article 30 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on participation in culture life, recreation, leisure and sport. [32036]

Hugh Robertson: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is committed to promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport. This reflects our commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and in particular the obligations set out in Article 30.

A number of measures are being taken forward by DCMS and its arms length bodies. Examples include the Arts Council England's Disability Equality scheme to increase the visibility of disability equality in the arts and Visit Britain's "Accessible tourism: Making it work for your business", which sets out the business case for accessible tourism and the economic potential in providing better services and encouraging more tourism from disabled people. Another example is the London 2012 legacy for disabled people plan, which is designed to ensure that the Olympic and Paralympic games leave a lasting legacy for disabled people.

The UK Government will report to the UN in July 2011 setting out how implementation has been achieved across Government. DCMS officials are working with their counterparts at the Office for Disability Issues in preparing the report.

EDUCATION

Building Schools for the Future Programme: Telford and Wrekin

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what range of savings in *(a)* cash and *(b)* percentage terms his Department has asked Telford and Wrekin council to model for its Building Schools for the Future programme. [28137]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 2 December 2010]*: We have asked Partnerships for Schools to work with each relevant local authority including Telford and Wrekin council and their private sector providers to identify any options to achieve efficiencies on each Building Schools for the Future scheme. This work will take full account of the specific needs and challenges of each project and does not assume that changes can or will be made or any savings identified in advance of this exercise. These discussions are expected to conclude by late December.

Bullying: Suicide

Mrs Glindon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps his Department is taking to reduce the incidence of the suicide of children and young adults as a result of physical, mental and online bullying. [24797]

Mr Gibb: Bullying can have negative effects on young people's lives well into their adulthood. This is why the coalition Government have made tackling bullying one of its key priorities. We are empowering schools to take a zero tolerance approach to tackling bullying. In our Education Bill next year, we will be giving heads and teachers a range of powers to instil discipline and promote good behaviour in and outside of school. We are also revising our current guidance on bullying to ensure that schools are given the right message about tackling bullying effectively and providing pastoral care for bullied children.

Together with the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), we are taking a number of measures to help combat cyber-bullying and online abuse such as revising existing good practice guidance for industry in moderating services used by children. The UKCCIS internet safety campaign "Zip it, Block it; Flag it" makes it clear that children should think about what they say and do online, block nasty messages and tell someone they trust if something online upsets them. We are also working to improve internet safety education in schools, including what children and young people should do if they experience cyber-bullying by helping children make responsible choices when online including avoiding and engaging in such behaviour.

Child Poverty Commission

Kate Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what progress has been made in establishing a Child Poverty Commission under the provisions of the Child Poverty Act 2010. [15848]

Sarah Teather: The Government's programme to reform public bodies demonstrates our determination to ensure that all public bodies must serve a useful purpose and provide value for money. In this context, the Government are reviewing plans to establish a Child Poverty Commission, as required by the Child Poverty Act.

We have today launched a consultation on our approach to tackling child poverty and improving life chances and social mobility. We will consider in the light of the consulting findings and ahead of the publication of the Child Poverty Strategy how best to take forward plans for the Child Poverty Commission.

Child Poverty Commission: Public Appointments

Kate Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what progress has been made in establishing and appointing members of the Child Poverty Commission under the provisions of the Child Poverty Act 2010; and if he will make a statement. [28301]

Sarah Teather: The Government's programme to reform public bodies demonstrates our determination to ensure that all public bodies must serve a useful purpose and provide value for money. In this context, the Government are reviewing plans to establish a Child Poverty Commission, as required by the Child Poverty Act.

We have today launched a consultation on our approach to tackling child poverty and improving life chances and social mobility. We will consider in the light of the consulting findings and ahead of the publication of the Child Poverty Strategy how best to take forward plans for the Child Poverty Commission.

Children: Communication Skills

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will ensure that communication competency is used as a key performance indicator for children's development; what recent representations he has received on that matter; and if he will make a statement. [23616]

Sarah Teather: The Department has received no formal representations on this matter.

We are determined to create an education system that delivers high standards for all children, and communication skills are an important part of this. All aspects of communication competence are built into the curriculum framework for English in primary schools and are subject to assessment at Key Stages 1 and 2. We have set out our plans for school reform in our schools White Paper and we will be announcing plans for a review of the national Curriculum shortly.

In the early years, the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework sets out requirements for raising standards in learning and development of children aged from 0 to five through observation against developmental milestones which include communication, language and literacy. The department's key performance indicator for the early years is based on a summary of children's development at age five, which includes communication, language and literacy. A review of the Early Years Foundation Stage is currently being conducted by Dame Claire Tickell.

Our forthcoming Green Paper on special educational needs and disabilities will set out our plans for improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, including those with speech, language and communication needs.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the number of children in *(a)* Essex, *(b)* London and *(c)* England classified as having (i) minor and (ii) significant difficulties with speech or language who have entered school in each of the last three years for which information is available. [23620]

Sarah Teather: The available information on pupils with speech, language and communications needs in maintained primary, state-funded secondary and special schools can be found in the following tables of the "Special Educational Needs in England" Statistical First Releases:

For 2010, information can be found in tables 23, 24 and 25 at:

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000939/index.shtml

For 2009, information can be found in tables 21, 22 and 23 at:

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000852/index.shtml

For 2008, information can be found in tables 20, 21 and 22 at:

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000794/index.shtml

Note:

It is not possible to identify whether these speech, language and communications needs are minor or significant.

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he made of the number of pupils in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools who had speech, language and communication needs in each of the last three years for which information is available. [23621]

Sarah Teather: The available information on the primary need of pupils with special educational needs can be found in the "Special Educational Needs in England" Statistical First Releases.

Data for the last three years can be accessed at:

Special Educational Needs in England: January 2008

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000794/index.shtml

in Table 9:

Special Educational Needs in England: January 2009

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000852/index.shtml

in Table 9:

Special Educational Needs in England: January 2010

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000939/index.shtml

in Table 11.

Departmental Pay

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much was paid to officials in his Department and its non-departmental public bodies in bonuses and other payments in addition to salary in each year since 1997; how many officials received such payments; and what the monetary value was of the largest 20 payments made in each such year. [18749]

Tim Loughton: The Department for Education was created on Wednesday 12 May 2010 and will be responsible for annual pay awards from 1 April 2011. Information on the non-consolidated awards, in addition to salary, agreed in the pay settlements for the predecessor Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007-10), Department for Education and Skills (2001-07) and Department for Education and Employment (1997 to 2001) has been provided from available records but full information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The available information on non-consolidated performance awards and non-consolidated payments and the value of the largest 20 awards is set out in the following table.

		Non-consolidated performance awards to promote and reward high performance			*Non-consolidated payments to support low paid staff*		
Performance year	*Department*	*Payments (£ million)*	*Number of staff receiving a payment*	*Percentage of all staff receiving a payment*	*Payments (£000)*	*Number of staff*	*Value of largest 20 payments*
2009-10	DCSF	1.9	1,368	51	156	780	£10,000-£15,000
2008-09	DCSF	1.9	1,494	51	167	835	£9,500-£15,000
2007-08	DCSF	1.9	1,394	51	197	985	£10,500-£25,000
2006-07	DFES	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
2005-06	DFES	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
2004-05	DFES	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
2002-03	DFES	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
2001-02	DFES	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
2000-01	DFEE	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
1999-2000	DFEE	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
1998-99	DFEE	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
1997-98	DFEE	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]

[1] The information for the former Department for Education and Skills (DFES) and the Department for Education and Employment (DFEE), is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The DFE does not hold the detailed pay information requested on its non-departmental public bodies and the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what allowances and payments in addition to salary were available to officials in his Department and its non-departmental public bodies in each year since 1997; and what the monetary value was of payments and allowances of each type in each such year. [18750]

Tim Loughton: The Department for Education (DFE) was created on Wednesday 12 May 2010. Information on the allowances and payments available to officials, in addition to the agreed 1997 to 2010 salary settlements for the predecessor Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007-10), Department for Education and Skills (2001-07) and Department for Education and Employment (1997 to 2001) has been provided in the following table. The information provided is from readily available records and includes information on DFE from 12 May 2010. Full information prior to 2007 can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Department and award period	*Payments available to staff in addition to salary*	*Total budget (£000)*	*Number of awards made*
12 May 2010 to 30 September 2010 DFE	[1, 4]	78	1,200
1 April 2010 to 11 May 2010 DCSF	[1, 4]	22	250
2009-10 DCSF	[1, 4]	200	3,300
2008-09 DCSF	[1, 4]	160	3,200
2007-08 DCSF	[1, 4]	150	2,500
2006-07 DFES	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]
2005-06 DFES	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]
2004-05 DFES	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]
2003-04 DFES	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]
2002-03 DFES	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]
2001-02 DFES	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]
2000-01 DFEE	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]
1999-2000 DFEE	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]
1998-99 DFEE	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]
1997-08 DFEE	[2, 4]	[3, 4]	[3, 4]

[1] The Instant Reward gift voucher scheme uses up to 0.2% of the pay bill to reward staff. The aim is to recognize and reward staff whose actions have significant impact on the departmental priority areas: Outcome and People Management; Collaborative working; Innovation; and Customer Service. The vouchers values are from £5 to £150.

[2] The Divisional Award Scheme rewarded staff. The scheme encouraged senior managers to recognize and reward achievements in their teams. Up to 0.2% of the pay bill was available.

[3] The information for the former Department for Education and Skills (DFES) and the Department for Education and Employment (DFEE), is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

[4] Indicates brace.

The DFE does not hold the detailed pay information requested on its non-departmental public bodies and the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Education: Travellers

Mr George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the number of children from Travelling families who were not in full-time education in each year since 2001. [29856]

Mr Gibb: We do not have information about the number of children who are not in full-time education.

Local authorities in England and Wales have had, since February 2007, a statutory duty to make arrangements to identify all children missing from education in their area. The duty applies in relation to children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school (for example, being educated at home, privately educated or in alternative provision).

It is important that schools and local authorities implement the systems and regulations and follow the guidance in place around keeping registers, excluding pupils and removing pupils from the school roll. Schools must fulfil their requirement to inform local authorities when pupils are deleted from the school roll or have "disappeared" following 10 days unauthorised absence from the school. Notifying the local authority is important because the local authority can then attempt to trace the children and ensure that any pupils that are removed from the roll of a school are receiving a suitable education.

Mr George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the educational achievement of children from Travelling families at each key educational stage compared to those of their peers with fixed addresses in each year since 2001. [29857]

Mr Gibb: Information about the educational achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 4 since 2003 is set out in the following tables. The information is collected on the basis of self-identification of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller ethnicity in English primary, secondary and special schools. The Department does not collect data on pupil mobility or their residence.

Key stage 1 assessment

Percentage achieving level 2+ in reading

	2003	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
Traveller of Irish heritage	28.0	31.0	32.0	29.6	33.2	31.9	35.6	35.8
Gypsy/Roma	42.0	45.0	42.0	39.9	37.7	36.9	34.7	37.3
Non-GRT	84.0	85.0	85.0	84.3	83.7	83.8	84.4	84.7

Percentage achieving level 2+ in writing

	2003	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
Traveller of Irish heritage	28.0	29.0	30.0	30.0	29.9	27.6	31.6	30.8
Gypsy/Roma	38.0	43.0	40.0	36.4	35.9	33.6	31.6	32.1
Non-GRT	81.0	82.0	82.0	81.2	80.2	79.9	80.8	80.9

Percentage achieving level 2+ in mathematics

	2003	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
Traveller of Irish heritage	52.0	50.0	52.0	49.8	52.3	51.6	53.3	50.8
Gypsy/Roma	60.0	64.0	62.0	60.4	55.5	57.0	51.8	52.6
Non-GRT	90.0	90.0	91.0	90.2	89.8	89.5	89.5	89.2

Percentage achieving level 2+ in science

	2006	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
Traveller of Irish heritage	49.5	49.2	48.4	54.2	51.4
Gypsy/Roma	58.3	55.5	57.8	50.5	52.0
Non-GRT	89.1	88.8	88.6	88.9	88.7

Key stage 2 assessment

Percentage achieving level 4+ in English

	2003	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Traveller of Irish heritage	23.0	23.0	26.0	26.5	34.9	33.4	29.1
Gypsy/Roma	30.0	30.0	37.0	34.9	34.4	39.6	33.1
Non-GRT	75.0	77.0	79.0	78.9	79.9	81.0	79.7

Percentage achieving level 4+ in mathematics

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Traveller of Irish heritage	19.0	23.0	26.0	28.6	35.7	30.2	33.6
Gypsy/Roma	27.0	25.0	33.0	31.7	35.9	38.5	36.2
Non-GRT	72.0	73.0	75.0	75.4	76.8	78.4	78.6

Percentage achieving level 4+ in science

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Traveller of Irish heritage	36.0	38.0	39.0	41.5	49.4	43.1	50.5
Gypsy/Roma	48.0	45.0	53.0	50.5	52.2	56.0	51.3
Non-GRT	86.0	86.0	86.0	86.4	87.4	88.0	88.0

Percentage achieving level 4+ in English and mathematics

	2006	2007	2008	2009
Traveller of Irish heritage	18.5	24.7	22.2	21.6
Gypsy/Roma	23.6	24.8	28.9	24.8
Non-GRT	69.5	70.8	72.7	71.8

Key stage 4 assessment

Percentage achieving 5+ A-C grades*

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Traveller of Irish heritage	41.6	30.2	22.5	19.0	16.6	18.3	24.4
Gypsy/Roma	23.2	13.5	11.7	10.4	14.0	16.4	19.8
Non-GRT	50.7	51.9	54.9	57.3	59.9	64.4	69.8

Percentage achieving 5+ A-C grades including English and mathematics*

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Traveller of Irish heritage	20.7	11.1	8.6	7.3	9.2
Gypsy/Roma	9.1	3.9	7.0	6.8	9.1
Non-GRT	42.5	44.0	45.8	48.2	50.7

Financial Services: Education

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make resources available to schools for teaching financial capability. [29637]

Mr Gibb: The recently published schools White Paper, "The Importance of Teaching", sets out how schools will be freed from the constraints of central Government direction, including trusting the professional judgment of teachers to support all children to progress. The coalition Government have also ensured, through its spending review decisions for the period 2011-15, that more resources are devolved to schools; this will enable teachers, rather than central Government, to decide which resources will best meet the needs of their pupils.

Free Schools

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what the responsibilities of his Department's Free Schools Group are. [24966]

Mr Gibb: The Free Schools Group is responsible for policy development and providing support to groups and individuals who are interested in establishing a new school.

Languages: GCSE

Mr MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what his policy is on reinstating the teaching of a modern language as a compulsory GCSE subject. [29729]

Mr Gibb: The Government believe that learning a language is important to the social and economic future of the country and to help children understand the world in which they live. We will be announcing more details about a review of the National Curriculum shortly. This review will consider the status of languages at both primary and secondary level. We plan to consult a wide range of academics, teachers and other interested parties to ensure that our core curriculum can compare favourably with those of the highest performing countries in the world.

On 6 September, in a speech at Westminster Academy, the Secretary of State announced an English Baccalaureate, to include a modern or ancient language as one of the core academic subjects that children should learn at GCSE level, along with English, maths, science and a humanity subject. Further detail was included in the White Paper "The Importance of Teaching", published on 22 November.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education pursuant to the answer of 12 July 2010, *Official Report*, column 570W, on personal, social, health and economic education, whether he plans to publish the sex and relationships education guidance to Schools, issued for consultation in January 2010; what assessment he has made of the compatibility of his proposals for sex and relationships education with proposed guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence on sex and relationships education within personal, social, health and economic education; and if he will make a statement. [29834]

Tim Loughton: We are considering the future guidance to schools on sex and relationships education in the context of our announcement of an internal review of personal, social, health and economic education in the "Schools White Paper, The Importance of Teaching", published on 24 November. We will make a further announcement about this review shortly.

Schools are currently required by law to 'have regard to' the guidance issued by the Secretary of State and published in 2000.

Physical Education: Manpower

Mike Freer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many advanced skills teachers of physical education there are. [28123]

Mr Gibb: There were 148 full and part-time advanced skills teachers of physical education employed in local authority maintained schools in England in January 2009 which is the latest information available. This figure is a head count and does not include academies.

Pre-school Education: Standards

Laura Sandys: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent assessment he has made of the *(a)* availability and *(b)* standard of early years provision in (i) South Thanet constituency and (ii) England. [24597]

Sarah Teather: These are matters for Ofsted. The chief inspector, Christine Gilbert, has written to the hon. Member and a copy of her reply has been placed in the House Libraries.

Pupils: Multiple Births

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to update the school admissions code to better meet the needs of multiple birth families; which organisations he plans to consult on such proposals; and if he will make a statement. [28901]

Mr Gibb: The school admissions code allows admission authorities to give priority to siblings when schools are oversubscribed, and contains a presumption that provision for multiple birth families will be made when setting oversubscription criteria. It is for authorities to decide, in consultation with their local communities, which oversubscription criteria are most appropriate for the needs of families in their area.

Officials have begun talking to interested parties around the review of the school admissions code announced in the schools White Paper, prior to full public consultation—meetings have included representation from the Twins and Multiple Births Association (TAMBA).

School Sport Partnerships: Finance

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment his Department made of the capacity of school sport partnerships to co-ordinate the work of national governing bodies of sport with schools in a local area prior to making the decision to end funding for school sport partnerships from April 2011. [25046]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education has announced that he will fund secondary schools to release a qualified PE teacher from timetable for one day each week in the school years 2011/12 and 2012/13 so that more pupils can enter competitions run by the national governing bodies of sport. He has also lifted the many requirements of the previous Government's PE and sport strategy which prevented schools from getting on with providing competitive sport for their pupils. Taken together, these measures will give schools the freedom to concentrate on providing a truly rounded education for their pupils, which includes sport. The Government's new school games will provide further incentive to national governing bodies of sport to offer more attractive, deliverable competitions for schools.

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what account his Department took of economies of scale for schools arising from school sport partnerships (SSPs) prior to taking the decision to end funding of SSPs from April 2011. [25048]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education's objective in the spending review was to protect school budgets and introduce a pupil premium, at a time when cutting the budget deficit is an urgent national priority. The Government have now given schools the freedom to decide whether to belong to partnerships such as those for sport and we trust school leaders to take their own decisions. The Secretary of State has, in addition, announced that he will fund secondary schools to release a qualified PE teacher from timetable for one day a week in the school years 2011/12 and 2012/13 to embed good practice and organise more competitive sport.

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate his Department made of the average level of funding provided to schools by school sport partnerships (SSPs) prior to its decision to end funding for SSPs from April 2011. [25049]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 29 November 2010]:* There is no average level of funding for school sport partnerships. The level of funding for each partnership is based on the number of staff working within it, which varies significantly from area to area. The standard model for a school sport partnership is: a full-time partnership development manager; a school sport co-ordinator (two days per week) in each secondary school; a primary link teacher (12 days per year) in each primary school; and an FE sport co-ordinator (two days per week) in each FE college.

Nic Dakin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment his Department made of the capacity of partnership development managers to co-ordinate voluntary sports clubs work with local schools prior to taking its decision to end funding for school sport partnerships from April 2011. [25050]

Tim Loughton *[holding answer 29 November 2010]*: The coalition Government's priority is to encourage more competitive school sport through the creation of a school games. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education's assessment is that the previous Government's PE and sport strategy is not effective or affordable for that specific objective. The school games will provide a clearer framework for national governing bodies of sport and local sports clubs to provide much more attractive competitions and support for schools. The development of better links between sports clubs and schools is the responsibility of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, which intends to continue funding for this work.

Schools: Admissions

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the level of demand for school places in *(a)* West Ham constituency, *(b)* the London borough of Newham and *(c)* London in each of the next five years. [28915]

Mr Gibb: It is the responsibility of each local authority to manage the supply and demand for primary and secondary school places in its area and secure a place for every child of statutory school age who wants one. Ministers play no role in deciding primary and secondary school provision in individual authorities and constituencies but the Department will continue to provide capital funding and work with local authorities to ensure there are sufficient school places.

The Department does collect information from each local authority on school capacity in maintained schools through an annual survey, which includes LAs' own pupil forecasts. A copy of the most recent survey data relating to the position at May 2010 has been placed in the House Libraries. However, the level of demand for school places cannot be determined by pupil forecasts alone as other local factors do have an influence, for example, surplus school places and changes to school capacity; the forecasting of demand is a matter for local authorities to determine.

Mr Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what his Department's most recent estimate is of the number of surplus places at maintained schools in *(a)* Reading East constituency and *(b)* England in each of the last five years. [28966]

Mr Gibb: The Department collects information from each local authority on the number of surplus school places in maintained schools through an annual survey. The numbers of surplus places are reported at local authority level and not broken down by constituency.

As at May 2010, there were 1,596 surplus primary places (14% of total capacity) in Reading; at secondary level there were 977 surplus places (15% of total capacity).

Copies have been placed in the House Libraries of the most recent data available relating to the position at May 2010 and surplus places information from previous years' survey results.

Mark Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what guidance his Department has given local authorities on the time to be taken in processing in-year school admissions. [29975]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: The Department for Children, Schools and Families issued question and answer guidance about the co-ordination of in-year school admissions on 7 October 2009.

Paragraph 3.22 of the school admissions code requires that applications made outside the normal admissions round are considered without delay. It is for local authorities to set a time scale within which they will process applications, although to take any longer than a week might be considered unreasonable in light of the requirement in paragraph 3.22.

In most cases, a decision will be easy to make. Except in the case of a grammar school, where a parent applies for a place and the school has places available the child should be admitted. There will be no need to refer to the oversubscription criteria. Even where one place is available and two children have applied, deciding which child should have priority will not normally require lengthy consideration. We believe most decisions could be made within five school days, but a small number of cases might be more complex. We think it would be reasonable for a local authority to allow admission authorities five school days to make a decision in the majority of cases, and a maximum of 10 school days in more complex cases.

Schools: Asbestos

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what recent estimate he has made of the number of children attending schools with buildings in respect of which *(a)* dangerous and *(b)* high levels of asbestos have been identified; [29603]

(2) what steps he plans to take to remove asbestos from *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school buildings in the next five years; [29604]

(3) what plans he has for the removal of asbestos from *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school buildings where dangerously high levels of asbestos have been identified; [29605]

(4) what plans he has for the refurbishment of school buildings in respect of which dangerous levels of asbestos have been found. [29606]

Mr Gibb: The latest estimate was that around 70% of school buildings contain some asbestos containing materials (ACMs). The estimate was made in 2007 based on a profile of the stock of school buildings which was based on earlier condition surveys of schools.

Since then a number of schools have been replaced under major capital building programmes. Buildings contain a range of ACMs, for example moulded or preformed asbestos lagging used as thermal insulation on pipes and boilers; asbestos insulating board used for fire protection, thermal insulation, partitioning and ducts; and asbestos- containing floor tiles and textured coatings. The responsibility to assess the condition of ACMs in schools falls to the duty holder, under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006, usually the local authority.

We have no plans to carry out a comprehensive programme of removal of asbestos across all schools. Asbestos must be managed in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. The danger from asbestos arises from the release of asbestos fibres. If schools are properly managed and maintained, there should not be dangerously high levels of asbestos fibres. Where asbestos is in a dangerous condition it must be sealed or removed in accordance with the Regulations.

Asbestos does not pose a serious risk if it is managed properly in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) does not recommend the routine removal of asbestos. Its advice remains that, providing that ACMs are maintained in good condition, they can be left where they are and managed until a building reaches the end of its life and asbestos can be removed without risk of exposing building users to risks arising from significant disturbance.

Responsibility for prioritisation of specific asbestos removal projects rests with individual schools and local authorities. The Government are committed to ensuring there is a fairer, more effective and more efficient system for allocation of capital money; our priorities for the allocation are to meet the need for additional pupil places.

Schools: Inspections

Charlotte Leslie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent assessment he has made of the appropriateness of the qualification requirements in respect of non-HM Inspectorate of Education inspectors at Ofsted; and if he will make a statement. [24106]

Mr Gibb: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, Christine Gilbert, has written to my hon. Friend and a copy of her letter has been placed in the House Libraries.

Letter from Christine Gilbert, dated 15 November 2010:

Your recent parliamentary question has been passed to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, for response.

In addition to Her Majesty's Inspectors, Ofsted directly employs regulatory inspectors who inspect social care provision and undertake regulatory activities relating to that provision.

A recruitment campaign in May 2010 for regulatory inspectors set out the following qualifications and experience as essential requirements for applicants:

a recognised social work qualification or a professional qualification relevant to working with children which must be at a minimum level 4 (NVQ level 4 or equivalent);

significant knowledge of social care regulations and standards including a wider knowledge of social care practice and legislation;

a robust knowledge of child protection and safeguarding of children.

In addition to the HMI and social care regulatory inspectors who work directly for Ofsted, the Inspection Service Providers, who are contracted to Ofsted to undertake inspections, employ inspectors as follows:

(i) Additional inspectors inspect schools, learning and skills and initial teacher education providers. The contractual obligations on the Inspection Service Providers require them to ensure that all inspectors are fit and proper to inspect on Ofsted's behalf. They must have credibility and up to date professional knowledge and will normally have gained a degree or an equivalent qualification. They are expected to have appropriate experience, usually drawn from a number of years in a senior management position in an education or other relevant setting or service. In addition, they need to have competence in the use of information technology and a clear enhanced criminal records bureau check that is refreshed every three years. Prior to appointment, all inspectors must provide employers' references and participate in a medical assessment to ensure they are fit for the work they are to undertake.

(ii) Early years inspectors carry out inspections of providers of early years and childcare against regulations and quality standards for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nearly all of the inspectors currently working for the Inspection Service Providers were until 1 September 2010 directly employed by Ofsted. They must have a full professional qualification in early education, care or regulatory work, or equivalent knowledge and experience. For those inspectors without a degree, Ofsted established a successful programme to assist in helping them study for one. This programme is being continued by the Inspection Service Providers and it is expected that all early years inspectors will have a degree by 2015.

A copy of this reply has been sent to Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for Schools, and will be placed in the library of both Houses.

Schools: Religion

Mr Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education with which faith groups he expects to work on the proposals in the schools White Paper; what form he expects that work to take; and if he will make a statement. [28685]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 6 December 2010]:* The Department for Education works with a wide range of faith groups that have schools in the maintained sector (including Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh groups) at official and ministerial level. We reaffirmed our commitment to work with these groups in the White Paper, "The Importance of Teaching".

Sex: Health Education

Mr Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education for what reasons Stonewall is the only campaign group quoted in paragraph 4.29 of the schools White Paper; which other campaign groups he plans to work with in developing his policy on sex and relationships education; and if he will make a statement. [29712]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 9 December 2010]:* The White Paper gave Stonewall as an example of a group that we will work with to make sure sex and relationships education encompasses an understanding of the ways in which humans love each other and stresses the importance of respecting individual autonomy. This is not the same as saying that Stonewall will be the only such group that we shall work with. We intend to work with key partners to ensure that sex and relationships education as a whole is of high quality and meets the needs of children and young people.

Special Educational Needs

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what qualifications in sign language are required by teaching assistants and communication support workers who work with deaf children who communicate primarily in sign language. [22808]

Sarah Teather *[holding answer 15 November]:* There are no mandatory qualifications for teaching assistants or support workers who work with deaf children and communicate primarily in sign language. Head teachers when recruiting and deploying a teaching assistant in this context should ensure the member of staff possesses the appropriate skills to carry out the role.

Mrs Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what his policy is on children with statements of special educational needs remaining in mainstream schools. [23562]

Sarah Teather *[holding answer 12 November 2010]:* The Government's policy is to improve the way parents of children with statements can express their preferences for the schools they wish them to attend, whether that it is a mainstream or special school. The forthcoming Green Paper on special educational needs and disabilities will include more information on this.

Sure Start Programme

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many Sure Start places there were in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* each region in each of the last 10 years; and how many such places he expects there to be in each of the next five years. [24231]

Sarah Teather: Figures for the number of children and their families attending and using Sure Start Children's Centres are not collected nationally. Local authorities in England are responsible for arranging sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need.

On 30 September 2010, 3,634 Sure Start Children's Centres were open in England, providing access to services to over three million children under five and their families.

The following table details how many Sure Start Children's Centres have been established in each region in England since 2003. There were no children's centres opened prior to 2003.

		2003	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*Total*
East Midlands	Centres	2	9	10	58	44	109	53	27	312
	Reach	1,954	8,291	6,422	47,345	37,082	90,506	46,421	19,725	257,746
East of England	Centres	7	6	25	34	97	114	75	55	413
	Reach	6,594	3,924	24,025	24,260	77,992	88,814	54,164	45,123	324,896
London	Centres	12	24	25	98	156	158	52	66	591
	Reach	8,955	19,986	22,073	90,367	141,686	131,157	35,712	48,607	498,543
North East	Centres	6	24	18	62	32	33	10	3	188
	Reach	5,498	18,937	11,395	48,266	23,232	23,215	5,723	2,561	138,827
North West	Centres	14	16	40	92	121	110	41	34	468
	Reach	11,900	12,277	37,622	82,846	104,842	91,659	29,549	28,180	398,875
South East	Centres	3	12	34	51	121	183	102	58	564
	Reach	3,298	10,141	29,226	44,690	104,426	158,367	87,221	47,377	484,746
South West	Centres	4	11	25	51	85	92	30	45	343
	Reach	4,235	10,307	19,985	39,119	70,453	77,541	22,267	34,456	278,363
West Midlands	Centres	4	9	33	75	94	88	56	16	375
	Reach	3,670	8,531	37,436	72,734	83,274	78,980	40,282	11,268	336,175
Yorkshire and Humber	Centres	6	18	38	75	70	118	50	5	380
	Reach	4,747	17,291	31,828	60,377	59,622	93,460	37,911	3,597	308,833
	Centres	58	129	248	596	820	1005	469	309	3634
	Reach	50,851	109,685	220,012	510,004	702,609	833,698	359,250	240,894	302,7004

The reach area defines those children and families with the opportunity to access children's centres.

Teachers: Unemployment

Mr Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate his Department has made of the number of fully-qualified teachers who are unemployed. [29421]

Mr Hurd: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking what estimate has been made of the number of fu[illegible]-qualified teachers who are unemployed. (29421)

Estimates of unemployment are taken from the Labour Force Survey. For the three month period ending September 2010 it is estimated that 49,000 people who hold either a teaching qualification to degree level, a first degree that provides qualified teacher status or a post graduate certificate in education, are unemployed.

Teachers: Vacancies

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many rural schools had unfilled teaching vacancies in each local authority area in the latest period for which figures are available. [27996]

Mr Gibb *[holding answer 2 December 2010]:* The information requested is not currently available.

The November 2010 School Workforce Census will provide the number of teacher vacancies in each school for the first time and therefore it will be possible to identify those in rural schools separately. This information will be available in spring 2011.

Universities

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many and what proportion of young people in each *(a)* local authority area and *(b)* constituency went to university in (i) 1991, (ii) 1997 and (iii) 2010. [31418]

Mr Willetts: I have been asked to reply.

I will respond to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

The numbers of young (aged under 21) undergraduate entrants, from each local authority and constituency in England and Wales, to UK higher education institutions are shown in Tables 1 and 2, which will be placed in the Libraries of the House. Figures are provided for the 1997/98 and 2008/09 academic years. Information for 1991 and 2010 is not available. The Department does not collect information on the number of residents in a particular area who are not in higher education, which would be necessary to calculate a proportion. It is, therefore, not possible to calculate the proportion of young people in each local authority and constituency who enter higher education.

Information on entrant numbers for the 2009/10 academic year will become available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency in January 2011. Figures provided in Tables 1 and 2 have been calculated using updated postcode information and are, therefore, not comparable with local authority and constituency level data which may have been published previously.

Comparable local authority and constituency-level information on entrants to higher education courses at further education colleges is not available.

Vocational Guidance

Ian Mearns: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what mechanism he plans to establish to ensure that schools deliver a professional and individualised careers service to pupils. [24146]

Mr Gibb: We intend to restore a focus on specialist expertise in careers guidance for young people based on the core principles of independence and professionalism, and will establish an all-age careers service by April 2012. We are reviewing legislative provisions with a view to focusing on schools' responsibility to secure independent, impartial careers guidance for all pupils, while removing unnecessary burdens in order to give schools the freedom to decide how best to do this.

Youth Services

Pat Glass: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has for the myplace programme; and if he will make a statement. [20352]

Tim Loughton: A written ministerial statement confirming capital funding for youth facilities planned under the myplace programme was published on 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 13-14WS. That same day I wrote to all myplace project leaders, copied to local MPs and Directors of Children's Services to confirm the Government's priorities for the programme, and in tandem the Big Lottery Fund wrote individually to projects to explain the way forward.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Apprentices: Harlow

Robert Halfon: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many apprenticeship starts there were in Harlow constituency in each year since 2000. [[illegible]118]

Mr Hayes: Table 1 shows the number of apprenticeship starts in Harlow parliamentary constituency from 2005/06 to 2008/09, the latest year for which final year data is available. 2005/06 is the earliest year for which we have apprenticeship starts based on the new parliamentary constituency boundaries which came in to effect in May 2010.

Table 1: Apprenticeship programme starts 2005/06 to 2008/09

	Harlow parliamentary constituency
2005/06	270
2006/07	290
2007/08	290
2008/09	340

Notes:

1. Figures for Harlow parliamentary constituency are rounded to the nearest ten.
2. Figures are based upon the home postcode of the learner and on constituency boundaries which came in to effect in May 2010. Historic information on apprenticeship starts and achievements under the previous parliamentary constituency boundaries can be found at: http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/statistics/statisticalfirstrelease/sfr_archive/

Source:

Individualised Learner Record

Information on the number of apprenticeship starts is published in a quarterly statistical first release (SFR), this includes information by parliamentary constituency. The latest SFR was published on 16 November 2010.

http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/statistics/statisticalfirstrelease/sfr_current

Broadband

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the effects of the utilisation of superfast broadband on levels of economic growth; and if he will make a statement. [28775]

Mr Vaizey: I have made no specific assessment, but various studies suggest superfast broadband will have a substantial positive effect on economic growth. This is why the Government are investing £530 million to support broadband roll-out. The evidence obtained from studies of the economic impact of the rollout of first generation broadband shows that communities with broadband grew faster than those without it.

Broadband Delivery UK: Finance

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much funding he plans to allocate to Broadband Delivery UK for the roll-out of superfast broadband; and from which budgets this funding will be drawn. [32142]

Mr Vaizey: £530 million was allocated in the spending review to support broadband rollout up to 2015. This is made up of £230 million from the underspend of the Digital Switchover Helpscheme up to 2013 and £150 million per annum from the TV licence fee settlement from 2013-15.

Broadband: Scotland

Gemma Doyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 588-89W, on broadband: Scotland, when he expects the West Dunbartonshire local authority area to benefit from greater availability of superfast broadband as a result of the UK Government's policies. [32107]

Mr Vaizey: We have so far identified four pilot projects, and announced our intention to select a further wave of projects in 2011. We have not made any decisions about locations beyond the initial four areas. When West Dunbartonshire will benefit will depend on how its circumstances compare to those of other areas. In particular, it will be important that the local authority, alongside the Scottish Government, is able to demonstrate the extent of the need for intervention in the local area and provide support for a project.

Media Ownership

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the media industry on the News Corporation bid for BSkyB; and if he will make a statement. [32193]

Mr Davey: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no such discussions about the proposed merger. However, prior to taking his decision to intervene on public interest grounds, he did receive written representations on the matter from various media sector enterprises. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is due to receive a report from Ofcom by 31 December on the potential for the merger to impact on the public interest and will take this into account in deciding whether or not to refer the merger to the Competition Commission for a full investigation.

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent discussions he has had with News Corporation on its bid for a majority holding in BSkyB. [32194]

Mr Davey: None. However, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State did receive substantive representations from News Corporation's legal advisers prior to taking his decision to intervene in this merger on public interest grounds.

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media, Olympics and Sport on News Corporation's bid for a majority holding in BSkyB. [32195]

Mr Davey: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no discussions on this matter with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Culture Media, Olympics and Sport.

Businesses: Financial Service Authority

Harriett Baldwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has had discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the likely effects on small businesses of the proposals of the Financial Services Authority to implement the recommendation of the Retail Distribution Review. [31462]

Mr Hoban: I have been asked to reply.

The Retail Distribution Review is the responsibility of the Financial Services Authority, an independent body.

Treasury Ministers and officials have discussions with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. It is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such discussion.

Contracts

Graeme Morrice: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many staff on fixed-term contracts his Department has employed since May 2010; what the average salary was of such staff; and what the total expenditure was on salaries for such contracts. [32135]

Mr Davey: The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has employed 12 people on fixed-term contracts since May 2010. The mean salary for these staff was £53,833 and the total annualised expenditure on salaries for these contracts will be £645,998.

Departmental Early Retirement

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many staff of *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies have been offered enhanced early retirement packages in each of the last three years. [22019]

Mr Davey: Under the Civil Service Compensation scheme, Departments and agencies can offer early retirement packages in circumstances prescribed by the Civil Service Management Code. These are on either flexible or compulsory early retirement (FER or CER) terms (where pensions are based on enhanced service); or approved early retirement (AER) terms (where pensions are not reduced for early payment).

The total number of staff who left the Department in the last three years on early retirement packages are shown in the following table.

Core BIS	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-2010*
FER or CER	96	16	18
AER	1	0	0

I have approached the chief executives of the Insolvency Service, Companies House, the National Measurement Office, the Intellectual Property Office and the Skills Funding Agency and they will respond to my hon. Friend directly.

Letter from Geoff Russell, dated 20 December 2010:

Thank you for your parliamentary question asking how many staff have been offered enhanced early retirement packages by the Skills Funding Agency (the Agency) in each of the last three years.

The Agency (and its predecessor, the Learning and Skills Council) has offered enhanced early retirement packages to six employees in the last three years. These include one employee leaving between November 2007—November 2008 (0.03 per cent of headcount) and five employees leaving between November 2009—November 2010 (0.15 per cent of headcount).

Letter from Stephen Speed, dated 3 November 2010:

The Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) has asked me to reply to your question how many staff of (a) his Department and (b) his agencies have been offered enhanced early retirement packages in each of the last three years.

The Insolvency Service is an executive agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Senior Civil Servants employed by The Insolvency Service are dealt with by its parent Department, BIS.

Responsibility for all Insolvency Service staff below Senior Civil Service Level has been delegated to The Service. In respect of staff employed by The Insolvency Service and falling within its responsibility, the Insolvency Service has not offered enhanced early retirement packages to any member of staff in each of the last three years.

Letter from John Alty, dated 3 November 2010:

I am responding in respect of the Intellectual Property Office to your Parliamentary Question tabled 01/11/2010, to the Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

In the last three years, staff offered early retirement packages are as follows:

	Number of staff
2007	Nil
2008	39
2009	39

Letter from Peter Mason, dated 3 November 2010:

I am responding in respect of the National Measurement Office (formerly National Weights and Measures Laboratory) to your Parliamentary Question tabled on 1 November [reference 2010/2068] asking how many staff have been offered enhanced early retirement packages in each of the last three years.

No staff in NMO, or its predecessor, have been offered enhanced early retirement packages in the last three years.

Letter from Gareth Jones, dated 4 November 2010:

I am replying on behalf of Companies House to your Parliamentary Question tabled 1 November 2010, UIN 22019 to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Six staff have been offered enhanced early retirement packages in the last three years. These were all offered in the year 2007/08.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31232]

Mr Davey: There are currently no London-based staff employed by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills who are paid at a rate less than the London Living Wage of £7.85 per hour.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31191]

Mr Davey: The Department's most recent estimate is that the rise in VAT from 1 January 2011 will increase expenditure by approximately £2.5 million in the current financial year.

Departmental spending review settlements are set on a tax-inclusive basis, including the increase to the standard rate of VAT. Departments can recover VAT that they incur on certain contracted out services.

Departmental Recruitment

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many members of the senior civil service his Department has recruited in each year since its inception; at what cost to the public purse that recruitment was undertaken in each such year; and if he will make a statement. [17332]

Mr Davey: The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) was created in June 2009. In 2009 we recruited 10 senior civil servants at a cost of £104,661.43 and in 2010 we recruited two senior civil servants at a cost of £66,529.83.

Nine of the senior civil servants were recruited from the private sector to work in the Shareholder Executive. In addition we recruited the BIS Director of Finance, the Managing Director, Marketing Group in UK Trade and Investment and the Chief Economic Adviser.

Open competitions were held to ensure that BIS recruited the best available candidates and has the specialist skills it needs to take forward its challenging agenda.

Departmental Training

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what training opportunities his Department provides to its staff on engineering and science. [32238]

Mr Davey: Training budgets are not held centrally but delegated to line managers and business units. Decisions are made locally on how the money is spent and this information is not held centrally. This could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Farepak

Mr Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will estimate the proportion of monies recovered by the administrators of Farepak that was paid to *(a)* former customers of Farepak and *(b)* the administrators. [31877]

Mr Davey: Total receipts during the period of the administration of Farepak, from 13 October 2006 to 4 October 2007, were £6,721,572. No monies were paid to customers and total fees and disbursements paid to the administrators were £654,926 which equates to 9.74% of total receipts.

The company subsequently entered into creditors' voluntary liquidation on 4 October 2007. The most recent receipts and payments account to 3 October 2010, shows total receipts of £10,779,201 in the liquidation, which sum includes £3,784,589 transferred from the administration. The liquidators estimate that there will be sufficient funds available for a dividend in the region of 15p in the £1. Following a court judgment, £246,180 has been paid to certain creditors whose funds were subject to a trust which equates to 2.28% of the total receipts in the liquidation. Total fees and disbursements paid to the liquidators were £504,413 which equates to 4.68% of the total receipts in the liquidation.

Fireworks

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will assess the merits of consolidating existing legislation regulating the sale and use of fireworks. [32328]

Mr Davey: There are no plans to consolidate the legislation regulating the sale and use of fireworks. The Government believes that the current package of fireworks regulations offers robust measures to regulate the supply, possession and use of fireworks which are generally widely understood.

Higher Education

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many students domiciled in Wales he expects to study in English universities in *(a)* 2012, *(b)* 2013 and *(c)* 2014. [31246]

Mr Willetts: We do not plan for the numbers of students domiciled in each UK country. We expect overall entrant numbers to remain broadly constant over the spending review period.

Higher Education Funding Council

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what assessment he has made of the effects of new university funding arrangements on Higher Education Funding Council for England-funded initial teacher training for university teachers; and if he will make a statement. [30960]

Mr Willetts: No such assessment has been made. The Higher Education Funding Council for England does not directly fund initial teacher training for university teachers. Academic staff are employed by higher education institutions which are responsible for determining and providing for the training of their staff. The Higher Education Academy has developed, and is currently consulting on enhancements to, the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education. This is a framework through which institutions can develop approaches to initial and continuing professional development for staff who teach and support student learning. It underpins much of the initial teacher training and continuing professional development in UK higher education.

North East England

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which Ministers of his Department have visited the North East since their appointment; and what the *(a)* date and *(b)* purpose was of each such visit. [31788]

Mr Davey: On 5 August my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State visited Corus in Redcar, attended a Growth Finance Roundtable at Teesside University with members of the North East Chambers of Commence and Northern Business Forum and also the National Renewable Energy Centre at Blyth.

On 8 October he made a speech at the Fastest 50 Business Awards, at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle.

On 17 June my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Universities and Science visited the Student Loans Company processing centre in Darlington and Northumbria university's 'Graduate Design Show' and the Centre for Life in Newcastle.

On 26 August my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning visited Sunderland to attend the launch of the Nissan Juke and Newcastle to visit the college.

Ofcom

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which parties *(a)* requested and *(b)* were granted extensions to the deadline for Ofcom's "Implementing Geolocation" consultation; and if he will make a statement. [31960]

Mr Vaizey: Ofcom's "Implementing Geolocation" consultation opened on 7 November 2010 and closed on 7 December 2010. 30 responses were received within the consultation period. Eight organisations requested extensions and all were granted in full, as follows:

Organisation	*Extension requested*	*Extension granted*
Arqiva	1 week	As requested
BBC	1 week	As requested
BEIRG	2 months	As requested
Digital UK	1 week	As requested
Freeview	1 month	As requested
ITV	2 months	As requested
Shure	2 months	As requested
Vodafone	3 days	As requested

Of those granted, four responses have now been received. All received responses are available on the Ofcom website.

Overseas Students

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many non-EU overseas students enrolled on courses below degree level at *(a)* general further education colleges, *(b)* sixth form colleges, *(c)* maintained schools, *(d)* independent schools and *(e)* private providers of education and training in England in each of the last three academic years. [29869]

Mr Hayes *[holding answer 9 December 2010]*: Table 1 shows the number of Government-funded non-EU domiciled learners participating on courses below level 4 (degree level) by provider type in England for 2007/08 to 2009/10, based on information for the year to date.

Government-funded learning as recorded on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) is restricted to home learners. Therefore funded learners who are non EEA (European Economic Area) nationals must have been resident in the UK for the three years preceding their course start date and the main purpose for residence was not to receive full-time education during any part of that three year period. There are a limited number of exceptions to this, for example—refugees, learners with indefinite leave to remain status, or learners studying under reciprocal exchange agreements.

The Department for Education does not collect information on the nationality or country of domicile of pupils in maintained or independent schools.

Table 1: Government funded participation of non-EU domiciled learners on courses below level 4 by provider type, 2007/08 to 2009/10 (provisional)

Academic year	*General FE college including tertiary*	*Sixth form college*	*Private sector public funded*	*Other*	*Total*
2007/08	8,000	500	500	3,400	12,300
2008/09[1]	7,400	500	300	9,500	17,800
2009/10[1]	5,700	200	200	3,300	9,400

[1] Figures for 2008/09 onwards are not directly comparable to earlier years as the introduction of demand led funding has changed how data are collected and how funded learners are defined from 2008/09 onwards. More information on demand led funding is available at

http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/datadictionary/businessdefinitions/Demand+Led+Funding.htm.

Notes:

1. These data includes Learner Responsive, Apprenticeships, Train to Gain and University for Industry data. The data do not include Adult Safeguarded Learning as information on country of domicile is not collected.
2. Figures include government-funded learners only, funded by The Skills Funding Agency/Young Person's Learning Agency.
3. Learners on a course of level 4 or higher are not included in the above figures. Learners on a course with 'no level assigned' are included in these data.
4. The 'Other' category includes Other Public Funded i.e. local authorities and higher education institutions, special colleges (agricultural and horticulture colleges and art, design and performing arts colleges) and specialist designated colleges.
5. All figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
6. Data for non-EU learners includes learners from the European Economic Area (EEA).

Source:

Individualised Learner Record

Post Office: North West

John Stevenson: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what information his Department holds on the number of people in the north west the Post Office employs. [32122]

Mr Davey: This Department does not hold details of the numbers of people employed by the Post Office.

I have therefore asked Moya Greene, the chief executive of Royal Mail, to respond directly to the hon. Member and a copy of the reply will placed in the Libraries of the House.

Postgraduate Education: Finance

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills when he plans to bring his proposals for a reduction in funding for postgraduate provision into effect. [30961]

Mr Willetts: We will publish the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) grant letter for 2011-12 shortly. It is for the council to determine how that resource should be allocated. The new system of higher education funding whereby funding will flow through the choices made by students rather than direct grants will be phased in from 2012-13. We will set our priorities for residual grant, including for taught postgraduate provision and our response to the postgraduate review in the forthcoming higher education White Paper. Research postgraduate provision is not directly affected by our proposed reforms.

Regional Development Agencies: Redundancies

Mr Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) what estimate he has made of redundancy costs in respect of staff of regional development agencies in each of the next three years; [32065]

(2) what estimate he has made of the redundancy costs arising from the closure of regional development agencies. [32066]

Mr Prisk: It is not yet possible to estimate future redundancy costs firmly because decisions on staff transfers to successor bodies have still to be settled and other factors will apply including the level of staff departures occurring through other reasons such as resignation. The impact of the Superannuation Act and the timing of the implementation of any interim measures and the new negotiated terms will also have an effect.

Science: Females

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much and what proportion of his Department's science budget was spent on measures to increase diversity and equality in the workforce in the science, engineering and technology sectors in each of the last three years; and how much and what proportion of that budget he plans to allocate to such measures in each year of the spending review period. [30134]

Mr Willetts: The research councils, which administer the majority of this Department's science budget, pursue measures to increase diversity and equality in the science, engineering and technology sectors as part of their duties under the Equalities Act. Programme spend in this area over the last three years is outlined below.

	2007/08	*2008/09*	£ *2009/10*
Postgraduate Disabled Student Allowances	664,995	691,213	563,291
Daphne Jackson Trust	309,447	373,234	457,096
Other RCUK-Led Activities	40,000	25,000	170,000

In addition, many of the initiatives funded from the Science and Society budget have diversity objectives. Funding for these initiatives over the last three years is outlined in the following table.

	2008/09	*2009/10*	£ *2010/11*
Big Bang Fair	150,000	350,000	350,000
National Science and Engineering Competition	150,000	260,000	260,000
National Science and Engineering Week	472,000	472,500	536,500
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network (STEMNET)	5,850,000	6,303,000	6,788,000
UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology	2,538,000	2,443,000	2,469,000
Women in Science, Engineering and Construction (WISE)	40,000	40,000	40,000

Decisions on the detailed breakdown of the Science and Society allocation, and the research councils' spend on diversity and equality, for the next four years, are yet to be taken. Funding for the UK Resource Centre will not be renewed after March 2011.

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills if he will take steps to ensure that the freezing of his Department's science budget does not affect the resourcing of activity to promote equality and diversity in the science, engineering and technology sectors. [30135]

Mr Willetts: Detailed decisions regarding measures and funding to support equality and diversity in the science, engineering and technology sectors will be made as part of the detailed planning process, following the publication of the science and research funding allocations on 20 December 2010.

We will encourage equality and diversity in the STEM workforce by embedding and mainstreaming them through a number of the programmes we fund, and those of the partners with which we work. This will build on the wider work of the government to promote inclusive workplaces. Delivery of this strategic outcome will be taken forward by a number of our delivery partners over the next spending review period. A broad mix of STEM activities and wider societal programmes are funded from the science and research allocation and these have a major impact on diversity in the STEM workforce. These include the work of STEMNET and the STEM Ambassadors to encourage a diverse STEM pipeline; the national academies' fellowships; research councils' PhD and fellowships awards; and the Big Bang Fair, and National Science and Engineering Competition.

Student Loans Company: Complaints

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how many complaints on the operations of the Student Loans Company his Department has received in each of the last five years. [31967]

Mr Willetts: Correspondence received by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills in relation to the Student Loans Company since 2005 is set out in the following table. A breakdown of these figures to show the number of complaints about the company's operations is not readily available and individual correspondence cases would need to be examined to determine this. Doing so would be a disproportionate cost.

Correspondence received by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills and its predecessors in relation to the Student Loans Company (SLC)

	Number of cases
2005	2939
2006	1766
2007	1953
2008	2722
2009	3070
2010	4198
Total	16648

Students: Finance

Nicola Blackwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps his Department plans to take to improve financial advice available to students *(a)* before, *(b)* during and *(c)* immediately following higher education courses. [27975]

Mr Willetts: Students have access to the National Association of Student Money Advisers (NASMA) whose aim is to ensure that students have access to accurate and current information about how to manage their finances and avoid unnecessary debt.

More broadly improving information for prospective students is a key priority for the Government. Students should have access to timely and comparable information, including on costs such as for tuition or accommodation, so they can make informed decisions about where and what to study. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is currently consulting with the sector on proposals for all higher education institutions to publish a standard Key Information Set, on a course by course basis, which will provide students with the information which research shows they want. The consultation document is available here:

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2010/choices.htm

Repayment of student loans is income contingent and graduates. Under the future progressive repayment system, graduates will not need to make any repayments until their income is above £21,000 (compared to £15,000 under the current system). If their loan is not repaid after 30 years, the remaining balance will be written off.

Students: Loans

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what steps his Department is taking to ensure prompt payment of loans to students by the Student Loans Company; and if he will make a statement. [32265]

Mr Willetts: BIS is working with and supporting the Student Loans Company (SLC) to improve the student finance service in England and ensure prompt payment to students.

Action has been taken: to strengthen the SLC's capability (including its senior management); to improve processing applications; to put in place additional staff; and to improve training. The SLC has also made technological improvements, including data links with UCAS and the Immigration and Passport Service. This Department is working with the SLC and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to make further improvements to the way household income is validated.

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills how much the Student Loans Company received in overpayments from former students who had already paid off their student loans in full in each year since 2007; and how many such persons so overpaid in each such year. [32306]

Mr Willetts: The requested information is not available in the form requested except at disproportionate cost.

It is possible for borrowers to over-repay their student loans because of the loan collection process. After the end of each tax year, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) notifies the Student Loans Company (SLC) of loan deductions made by employers in the previous tax year. Due to this time lag, it is possible for people to over-repay. However, all overpayments are refunded with interest.

Since December 2009, in order to reduce the number of those who over-repay, borrowers nearing the end of their loan repayment term are notified by the SLC that they may opt out of the PAYE system, and complete their loan repayments by direct debit. Additionally, borrowers are advised to monitor their own repayments so they can calculate when they are likely to repay their loan in full.

Tobacco: Sales

Steve Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether the *(a)* Reducing Regulation Committee and *(b)* Regulatory Policy Committee (i) has reviewed or (ii) plans to review the evidential basis for the prohibition of the display of tobacco products. [17424]

Mr Prisk: Reducing the number of young people who start to smoke is a public health priority for the coalition Government. Legislation prohibiting the display of tobacco products is a legacy from the last Government, and as with all legacy regulations, is being reviewed by the coalition Government in light of the new system of regulatory control. This will include its review by both the Reducing Regulation Committee and the Regulatory Policy Committee, with the aim of ensuring that the health policy goal can be delivered in a way that minimises additional burdens on retailers.

White-space Devices

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has estimated the *(a)* monetary cost and *(b)* potential disruption to the programme-making and special events sector of the use of unlicensed white-space devices; and if he will make a statement. [31958]

Mr Vaizey: The following table shows monthly spend by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills on consultants and temporary employees since April 2010. In producing these figures, we have used the Office for National Statistics (ONS) definition of 'temporary/casual employees' which is:

"those who have a fixed term contract of 12 months or less or are employed on a casual basis."

		£
2010	*Spend on consultants*	*Spend on temporary employees*
April	848,310	780,981
May	95,012	752,617
June	197,307	780,226
July	146,592	742,062
August	526,578	712,312
September	281,954	641,273
October	609,134	631,743
November	443,400	501,868

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has commissioned research into the potential effects on broadcasters of the deployment of white-space devices; and if he will make a statement. [31959]

Mr Vaizey: Ofcom has commissioned substantial research on the likelihood of interference from white-space devices, so that it can be sure its regulation prevents harmful interference to users. Ofcom will only allow use of white space devices if they do not cause harmful interference to broadcasters. We therefore anticipate that there will no effect on broadcasters, and it is not necessary to commission research on this specific area.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills whether he has considered the merits of providing a right of redress for licensed spectrum users who experience interference from white-space devices; and if he will make a statement. [31962]

Mr Vaizey: Ofcom will only allow the use of white space if it does not cause harmful interference. There are not, therefore, anticipated to be any specific rights of redress. Ofcom is proposing to licence exempt the white-space devices. Should the white-space devices deviate from the parameters set out in the exemption, Ofcom is able to bring criminal proceedings against the user of the device. However, the difficulty of locating these devices will have a significant impact on Ofcom's consideration of an investigation into interference.

HEALTH

Benzodiazepines

Eric Ollerenshaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the evidential basis was for the increase in his Department's maximum recommended period for withdrawal from benzodiazepines; [31747]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 3 December 2010, *Official Report*, columns 1070-72W, on benzodiazepines what legislative provisions in *(a)* UK and (b) EU law governed the issue of each of the generic lorazepam licences issued between 1981 and 1993; [31748]

(3) what the name is of each *(a)* company to which each generic lorazepam licence given since 1980 was granted and *(b)* product produced under each licence; [31749]

(4) under what legislative provision the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is authorised to destroy data for licences after 15 years; on what date the present record management policy of the MHRA was implemented; on what date the clinical data files relating to Ativan (lorazepam) were destroyed; and if he will make a statement. [31750]

Mr Simon Burns: Drug misuse and dependence UK guidelines on clinical management produced by the four UK health departments provides guidance on the treatment of withdrawal from Benzodiazepines. These guidelines do not refer to a maximum period for withdrawal. They advise that a reduction in dose (converted to an appropriate dose of diazepam) is tapered over time with regular assessments to determine the most effective rate of this reduction based on the individual clinical needs of the patient.

A list of granted marketing authorisations for generic Lorazepam is provided in the following table. The name of the marketing authorisation holder and the product name are provided in each case. The table also indicates the legislative provision under which each generic licence was authorised where this has been established from available records.

At the time these Marketing Authorisations were granted the extant directive on medicinal products was Directive 65/65/EC. Applications for generic products would have been made under Article 4.8a which made provision for an abridged application, that is, an application made without supplying results of toxicological tests and clinical trials.

An abridged application was permitted if either (i) the holder of an existing authorisation gave consent for his clinical and toxicological data to be cross-referenced or (ii) the product had well established use with recognized efficacy and an acceptable level of safety or (iii) the medicinal product was essentially similar to a product which had been authorized on the basis of full data on safety and efficacy including clinical trials. It was Article 4.8a(iii) that was most commonly used at that time for generic applications.

The MHRA is not legally required to retain any data it receives as part of an application. Under MHRA record management policy all application files (files that are submitted by a manufacturer for the licensing of a product) and data for licences are held for 15 years. Clinical trial files are held for five years. From September 2010, the MHRA has only kept other data subject to ongoing business.

The MHRA continuously monitors the safety of all medicines in the UK using a variety of sources including information from clinical studies, published literature, spontaneous case reports, data from marketing authorisation holders as well as other regulatory authorities. This information is used to ensure that up to date information is provided in the product information. In doing this, the MHRA does not rely on the safety information in the original application file, especially when the application is not recent.

Authorisation number	*Authorisation holder company name*	*Authorisation date*	*Licensed product name*	*Legislative basis*
PL 00530/0080	Norton Healthcare Limited	1 April 1981	Lorazepam Tablets B.P. 1MG	Not confirmed
PL 00530/0081	Norton Healthcare Limited	1 April 1981	Lorazepam Tablets B.P. 2.5MG	Not confirmed
PL 00142/0164	Actavis UK Limited	18 November 1982	Lorazepam Tablets BP 1MG	Not confirmed
PL 00142/0165	Actavis UK Limited	18 November 1982	Lorazepam Tablets BP 2.5 MG	Not confirmed
PL 04569/0024	Generics (UK) Limited	8 December 1982	Lorazepam Tablets BP 1 MG	Not confirmed
PL 04569/0025	Generics (UK) Limited	8 December 1982	Lorazepam Tablets 2.5MG	Not confirmed
PL 00225/0063	DDSA Pharmaceuticals Limited	4 February 1985	Lorazium Tablets 1MG	Not confirmed
PL 00225/0075	DDSA Pharmaceuticals Limited	18 October 1985	Lorazium Tablets 2.5MG	Abridged Application
PL 04556/0019	Pharmvit Limited	8 January 1986	Lorazepam Tablets 1MG	Not confirmed
PL 04556/0020	Pharmvit Limited	8 January 1986	Lorazepam Tablets 2.5MG	Not confirmed
PL 04416/0016	Sandoz Limited	11 January 1987	Sedazin Tablets 1MG	Cross Referred to PL 00530/0080
PL 04416/0017	Sandoz Limited	11 January 1987	Sedazin Tablets 2.5MG	Cross Referred to PL 00530/0081
PL 04416/0094	Sandoz Limited	23 March 1987	Lorazepam 1 MG Tablets	Abridged Application
PL 04416/0095	Sandoz Limited.	23 March 1987	Lorazepam Tablets 2.5MG	Abridged Application
PL 00095/0126	Cyanamid of Great Britain Limited	6 March 1991	Lorazepam Tablets 1MG	Not confirmed
PL 00095/0127	Cyanamid of Great Britain Limited	6 March 1991	Lorazepam Tablets 2.5MG	Not confirmed

Authorisation number	*Authorisation holder company name*	*Authorisation date*	*Licensed product name*	*Legislative basis*
PL 00401/0050	M A Steinhard Limited	22 March 1991	Almazine Lorazepam Tablets 1MG	Not confirmed
PL 00401/0051	M A Steinhard Limited	22 March 1991	Almazine Lorazepam Tablets	Not confirmed
PL 00039/0182	UCB Pharma Limited	11 July 1991	Tablets Lorazepam 1MG	Not confirmed
PL 00152/0224	BERK Pharmaceuticals Limited	11 July 1991	Lorazepam Tablets 1MG	Cross Referred to PL 00530/0080
PL 00152/0225	BERK Pharmaceuticals Limited	11 July 1991	Lorazepam Tablets 2.5MG	Cross Referred to PL 00530/0081
PL 00037/0180	Abbott Laboratories Limited	11 July 1991	Lorazepam 1MG Tablets BP	Not confirmed
PL 00037/0181	Abbott Laboratories Limited	15 September 1991	Lorazepam 2.5MG Tablets BP	Not confirmed
PL 00039/0183	UCB Pharma Limited	31 March 1992	Tablets Lorazepam 2.5MG	Not confirmed
PL 04077/0124	M and A Pharmachem Limited	23 August 1993	Lorazepam Tablets 1MG	Abridged Application
PL 04077/0125	M and A Pharmachem Limited	23 August 1993	Lorazepam Tablets 2.5 MG	Abridged Application
PL 17521/0060	Metwest Pharmaceuticals Limited	19 July 2002	Lorazepam 1MG Tablets	Cross Referred to PL 00225/0063
PL 17521/0061	Metwest Pharmaceuticals Limited	19 July 2002	Lorazepam 2.5mg Tablets	Cross Referred to PL 00225/0075

Cancer: Drugs

Luciana Berger: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate the Department has made of the number of patients in *(a)* England and *(b)* Liverpool with rare forms of cancer who will receive funding for treatment from (i) the Interim Cancer Drugs Fund and (ii) the Cancer Drugs Fund to 2013; [31773]

(2) how many patients with rare forms of cancer in *(a)* Liverpool, Wavertree constituency and *(b)* England have received treatment as a result of funding from the Interim Cancer Drugs Fund; [31774]

(3) if he will encourage clinical panels to develop specific policies for the funding of treatments for very rare cancers from the Cancer Drugs Fund in respect of *(a)* England and *(b)* Liverpool. [32040]

Mr Simon Burns: We have made no such estimate and do not hold information on the number of patients with rare forms of cancer who have received treatment through the additional cancer drugs funding in the Liverpool Wavertree constituency and in England.

As of 15 November, funding from the additional £50 million made available in this financial year had been agreed for the treatment of more than 250 cancer patients in England. These decisions are being made by regional clinically-led panels, in accordance with the guidance issued by the Department to strategic health authorities in July, copies of which have already been placed in the Library.

We have published for consultation our proposals for arrangements for the Cancer Drugs Fund which will operate from April 2011 in 'The Cancer Drugs Fund: A Consultation'. We want health professionals, patients, carers, the pharmaceutical industry and the public to give us their comments on these proposals. This consultation document is available in the Library.

Care Quality Commission

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations he has received on arrangements for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to register dental practices in England from 1 April 2011; what estimate he has made of the average time it will take each practice to comply with the regulatory framework for professional dentistry proposed by the CQC; and if he will make a statement. [31032]

Mr Simon Burns: As of 15 December, 164 pieces of correspondence had been received by the Department. These include a letter from the British Dental Association (BDA) and correspondence from individual dentists, including postcards sent as part of the BDA postcard campaign.

In October 2009, the Department undertook and published an impact assessment of regulation of primary medical and dental care providers under the Health and Social Care Act (2008). The impact assessment considered the cost and benefits of registering primary care providers.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) has already started receiving completed applications for registration from primary dental care providers.

It is expected that most primary dental care providers who already provide a good quality service for patients will already be meeting the essential levels of safety and quality set out in the registration requirements.

Once registered, CQC will review the performance of providers at least once every two years, to provide assurance that they are continuing to comply with the registration requirements. Providers could be checked at more frequent intervals if there are concerns about the service or if it is assessed to be of a higher risk.

To keep the burden of registration on providers to a minimum, CQC is committed to using information that is held centrally or is already held by other bodies where possible.

Consumer Organisations

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) which consumer groups he has met since his appointment; [29790]

(2) which *(a)* food and food-related companies and *(b)* trade associations he has met since his appointment. [29791]

Anne Milton: In discharging his official duties the Secretary of State for Health, my right hon. Friend the Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr Lansley), meets with representatives from such organisations in a wide range of fora, including speaking engagements, conferences and seminars.

The Secretary of State for Health has held no individual meetings with consumer groups or trade associations, although he has met a range of such organisations at multi-stakeholder meetings. He has held one individual meeting with a food company, Unilever.

Departmental Press Releases

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions his Department has provided embargoed media briefings prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010; in respect of how many such briefings his Department was informed that the embargo had been breached; what steps were taken as a result of each such breach; and on how many occasions his Department has provided media briefings without an embargo prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010. [31922]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department has held two embargoed media briefings prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010.

The Department was not informed that the embargo had been breached on either occasion.

There have been no occasions on which the Department has provided media briefings without an embargo prior to an oral statement to the House since 26 May 2010.

Departmental Procurement

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible have taken to comply with the Guidance of the Office of Government Commerce on promoting skills through public procurement issued in 2009. [31323]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department is aware of this guidance and, where appropriate, incorporates elements of the guidance within tender and contract documentation, providing it offers value for money and does not affect the competitive process.

The Department's Executive Agency, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency is not aware of any steps taken to comply with the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) guidance on promoting skills through public procurement.

The Department's non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) do not undertake procurements of the size, scale and nature which readily enable many of the steps set out in the OGC guidance on promoting skills through public procurement, however, the Department, its agencies and NDPBs are all fully engaged on measures to ensure and promote opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises as set out in the guidance.

EllaOne

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he has issued to doctors on the abortifacient nature of ellaOne; and if he will make a statement. [31706]

Mr Simon Burns: Ellaone contains ulipristal acetate, a selective progesterone receptor modulator. Ellaone was licensed for use as a single dose of 30mg as an emergency contraceptive by the European Committee for Medicinal Products for Human use (CHMP) in May 2009. It is used to prevent pregnancy for up to five days after unprotected intercourse or contraceptive failure, mainly by preventing or delaying ovulation. Ellaone is contraindicated for use during an existing or suspected pregnancy.

In the United Kingdom, ellaOne is licensed as a prescription only medicine. Full information relating to the safe and appropriate use of a medicine is provided to health care professionals in the Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC) and to women in the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL). The SmPC and PIL for ellaOne clearly inform women and health care professionals that it should not be taken by a woman who knows she is pregnant and that a pregnancy test should be undertaken if she suspects she is pregnant. The SmPC and PIL also provide information on the known side effects for ellaOne, most common of which are headache, nausea, menstrual disorders, and abdominal pain.

There is no published experience of pregnancy termination with ellaOne and in clinical studies a 30mg dose of ulipristal acetate did not interrupt existing pregnancies. Nevertheless, CHMP considered that such an effect could not be excluded and that ellaOne could potentially be used "off-label" in an attempt to terminate pregnancy. On this basis, no information on the potential use of ulipristal as an abortifacient has been included in the information provided for doctors and women. However, the publicly available risk management plan for ellaOne includes a number of measures taken to minimise the potential risk of off-label use, including a post marketing study to monitor how Ellaone is being used in real-life.

When used in accordance with the product information ellaOne is a safe and effective option for emergency contraception. As with all marketed medicines used in the UK, the safety of ellaOne is continuously monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), with independent expert advice from the Commission on Human Medicines. In the event of any important new safety information emerging, the MHRA will take action to ensure that this is accurately reflected in the product information and communicated to health professionals and women.

EllaOne: Prescriptions

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions for the drug ellaOne were issued in each health authority area in each year since it was licensed; what conditions apply to the availability of ellaOne in pharmacies; and if he will make a statement. [31661]

Mr Simon Burns: Information on the number of prescription items prescribed and dispensed since ellaOne was launched in October 2009, is shown in the following table.

Prescription items for ellaOne prescribed in England and dispensed in the community in the United Kingdom, October 2009 to October 2010, by strategic health authority (SHA)

SHA	*Number of items*
East midlands	214
East of England	217

Prescription items for ellaOne prescribed in England and dispensed in the community in the United Kingdom, October 2009 to October 2010, by strategic health authority (SHA)

SHA	*Number of items*
London	338
North-east	109
North-west	193
South central	211
South-east coast	244
South-west	297
West midlands	213
Yorkshire and the Humber	293
Unidentified prescribing	12
Grand total	2,341

Notes
1. EllaOne was licensed for use in the UK in May 2009 and launched in October 2009.
2. 'Unidentified prescribing' is prescribing which cannot be attributed to an SHA.
Source
Prescribing Analysis and CosT tool (PACT) system.

In the UK ellaOne is licensed as a prescription only medicine. Under medicines legislation, prescription only medicines may generally only be sold or supplied by, or under the supervision of, a pharmacist on registered pharmacy premises against a national health service or private prescription written by an independent prescriber. These legal restrictions apply equally to the sale, supply and advertising of medicines via the internet.

Health Professions

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he has had discussions with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on the effects on the provision of health and social care professionals with postgraduate qualifications of implementation of the Government's proposals on student funding; and if he will make a statement. [30962]

Anne Milton: The Government's proposals to change funding arrangements in higher education relate to students in under-graduate education. The current arrangements for funding postgraduate education will continue.

The Secretary of State for Health has had discussions with the Minister for Universities and Science, my right hon. Friend the Member for Havant (Mr Willetts), about the proposed changes to the funding arrangements for undergraduate education and we are keen to ensure there will be no adverse impact on the recruitment and retention of health and social care professionals.

Health Professions: Higher Education

Fiona Mactaggart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will assess the effects of the Government's proposals for funding of higher education on the future supply of health professionals requiring a postgraduate qualification; and if he will make a statement. [31476]

Mr Simon Burns: The Government's proposals to change funding arrangements in higher education relate to students in under graduate education. The current arrangements for funding postgraduate education will continue.

The Secretary of State for Health has had discussions with the Minister for Universities and Science, my right hon. Friend the Member for Havant (Mr Willetts), about the proposed changes to the funding arrangements for undergraduate education and we are keen to work together to understand the impact and ensure there will be no adverse impact on the recruitment and retention of health and social care professionals.

Health Services: Dudley

Margot James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will estimate the level of savings which will accrue from reductions in NHS administration costs in the metropolitan borough of Dudley during the comprehensive spending review period; [32199]

(2) what plans he has for the use of funds saved through the reduction of NHS administration costs in the metropolitan borough of Dudley. [32200]

Mr Simon Burns: The spending review announced that the costs of administration across the health system will be reduced by one third in real terms by 2014-15, delivering a recurrent annual saving of £1.9 billion. This includes savings from significantly reducing the number and cost of our non-departmental public bodies and from reforming and reducing the costs of administration in the national health service, including through the proposed abolition of primary care trusts and strategic health authorities.

It is the responsibility of the NHS locally to determine how to deliver these savings.

All these savings, along with all other efficiency savings, will be re-invested in services for patients. It will be the responsibility of local commissioners to determine, within their overall budgets, ~~how~~ best these savings can be invested in order to meet the needs of, and improve outcomes for, their local populations.

Health Services: Wales

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had with Welsh Assembly Government Ministers on cross-border healthcare. [32191]

Anne Milton: The Secretary of State met with Edwina Hart AM, the Minister for Health and Social Services in the Welsh Assembly Government, in Cardiff on 1 December to discuss a range of issues including cross-border healthcare.

HIV Infection: Grants

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the *(a)* AIDS support grant and *(b)* HIV Capital Grant will be distributed. [31606]

Anne Milton: In order to support local flexibility and to reduce administrative burdens, the 2010 spending review settlement announced that all current Department of Health social care revenue grants, including the AIDS support grant, will roll into the revenue support grant issued by Department for Communities and Local Government from 2011-12. The revenue support grant is not ring-fenced and councils can spend it as they choose. As part of rolling the AIDS support grant into revenue support grant, the Department considered responses to its summer consultation on the future distribution of three social care grants including the AIDS support grant. Details of the consultation exercise are available at:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Responsestoconsultations/DH_122575

The allocation basis for the AIDS support funding within revenue support grant will remain case load based, using 2008 data from the Health Protection Agency, for both 2011-12 and 2012-13 allocations. This option minimises the change in funding for local authorities and ensures that the funding is distributed to those areas with the greatest demand for HIV/AIDS services. Details of the allocation of the revenue support grant, including HIV/AIDS allocations are available at:

www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/1112/lgfr1112/index.htm

From 2011-12 the HIV capital grant will no longer be a specific capital grant. In 2010-11 the Department of Health issued seven separate capital grants. The Department of Health is maintaining capital funding at 2010-11 levels but will issue only one capital grant in 2011-12 and 2012-13, the capital investment in community capacity grant. The grant is not ring-fenced but is designed to support the three key areas of personalisation, reform and efficiency. This funding will enable continued capital investment to support delivery of adult social care services, including HIV/AIDS services. The capital investment in community capacity grant is distributed using the total adults social care relative needs formula. Details of the capital grant including local authority allocations of this grant are available at:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Localauthoritysocialservicesletters/DH_122345

HIV Infection: Respite Care

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what financial support his Department provides to non-medical HIV respite centres. [31604]

Anne Milton: The provision of non-medical HIV respite care is supported by the local authority AIDS support grant, which is £25.5 million in 2010-11.

HIV Infection: Wales

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with Welsh Assembly Government Ministers on cross-border delivery of support for those diagnosed with HIV and AIDS. [31605]

Anne Milton: The Secretary of State for Health and Welsh Assembly Government Ministers have had no discussions on cross-border delivery of support for those diagnosed with HIV and AIDS. However, departmental officials continue to be in routine contact with Welsh Assembly Government officials on this issue.

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients resident in England are being treated for AIDS and HIV at respite centres in Wales. [31607]

Anne Milton: In 2009, 60,240 people were living with diagnosed HIV infection and resident in England. Of these, 22 accessed HIV care in Wales, of whom 19 were receiving anti-retroviral therapy.

Hospitals: Admissions

Ms Bagshawe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many admissions to hospital occurred as a consequence or suspected consequence of alcohol consumption in each primary care trust area in each year since 2008-09. [28167]

Anne Milton: The information is in the following tables.

Table 1: Estimate of alcohol-related admissions by primary care trust (PCT) of residence for 2008-09 and 2009-10

	2009-10		*2008-09*	
PCT of residence	*Estimate of alcohol-related admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*	*Estimate of alcohol-related admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT	9,311	10	8,279	9
Barking and Dagenham PCT	3,284	8	3,016	7
Barnet PCT	5,393	6	4,419	5
Barnsley PCT	5,886	7	5,270	7
Bassetlaw PCT	2,722	9	2,343	8
Bath and North East Somerset PCT	3,023	7	2,980	8
Bedfordshire PCT	7,025	7	6,355	7
Berkshire East PCT	5,829	6	5,328	6
Berkshire West PCT	5,113	5	5,116	5
Bexley Care Trust	3,429	5	2,388	4
Birmingham East and North PCT	7,959	6	7,154	6
Blackburn With Darwen PCT	4,078	9	2,911	7
Blackpool PCT	4,134	8	3,485	6
Bolton PCT	5,562	7	5,275	7
Bournemouth and Poole Teaching PCT	6,789	6	5,299	5
Bradford and Airedale Teaching PCT	10,936	7	10,022	7
Brent Teaching PCT	4,799	7	4,203	6
Brighton and Hove City PCT	5,030	8	5,151	8
Bristol PCT	10,244	8	9,667	8
Bromley PCT	5,369	6	5,303	6

Table 1: Estimate of alcohol-related admissions by primary care trust (PCT) of residence for 2008-09 and 2009-10

	2009-10		2008-09	
PCT of residence	*Estimate of alcohol-related admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*	*Estimate of alcohol-related admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*
Buckinghamshire PCT	6,369	5	5,363	5
Bury PCT	4,371	8	4,103	7
Calderdale PCT	4,414	7	3,622	7
Cambridgeshire PCT	12,605	8	11,353	8
Camden PCT	3,499	7	3,019	6
Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT	9,790	8	8,877	7
Central Lancashire PCT	12,554	8	11,467	8
City and Hackney Teaching PCT	3,579	6	2,883	5
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly PCT	11,921	7	10,649	7
County Durham PCT	13,934	9	13,051	8
Coventry Teaching PCT	7,181	8	6,229	8
Croydon PCT	6,072	7	5,471	6
Cumbria Teaching PCT	12,276	8	11,388	7
Darlington PCT	2,532	8	2,463	8
Derby City PCT	6,579	9	6,580	9
Derbyshire County PCT	16,488	8	15,344	8
Devon PCT	14,748	7	14,083	6
Doncaster PCT	6,835	8	6,091	7
Dorset PCT	8,162	6	6,998	5
Dudley PCT	7,756	8	7,042	7
Ealing PCT	6,670	8	6,384	7
East and North Hertfordshire PCT	7,614	6	5,800	5
East Lancashire Teaching PCT	10,632	9	8,040	7
East Riding of Yorkshire PCT	6,088	6	5,209	6
East Sussex Downs and Weald PCT	6,732	8	6,736	7
Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT	14,666	8	13,338	7
Enfield PCT	4,893	6	4,106	5
Gateshead PCT	5,706	11	5,670	11
Gloucestershire PCT	12,138	7	10,937	7
Great Yarmouth and Waveney PCT	5,281	9	4,687	8
Greenwich Teaching PCT	3,259	5	2,811	5
Halton and St Helens PCT	8,379	9	7,893	8
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	3,154	7	2,916	7
Hampshire PCT	20,140	6	18,368	6
Haringey Teaching PCT	3,858	7	3,172	6
Harrow PCT	3,545	6	3,161	6
Hartlepool PCT	2,673	9	2,279	8
Hastings and Rother PCT	3,513	7	3,534	7
Havering PCT	4,549	8	4,089	7
Heart of Birmingham Teaching PCT	6,510	8	5,971	8
Herefordshire PCT	3,404	7	3,055	7
Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale PCT	6,163	9	5,682	8
Hillingdon PCT	5,404	8	4,842	7
Hounslow PCT	4,516	8	4,163	7
Hull Teaching PCT	5,637	7	4,840	6
Isle of Wight NHS PCT	1,569	6	1,429	5
Islington PCT	3,714	7	3,073	6
Kensington and Chelsea PCT	2,246	6	1,993	6
Kingston PCT	2,353	7	1,863	6
Kirklees PCT	6,933	6	5,840	6
Knowsley PCT	4,536	9	4,171	8
Lambeth PCT	3,832	6	3,313	5
Leeds PCT	14,851	7	12,821	6
Leicester City PCT	6,801	7	6,525	7
Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT	11,914	7	10,969	6
Lewisham PCT	4,112	5	3,999	5
Lincolnshire Teaching PCT	13,767	7	12,120	6
Liverpool PCT	14,309	10	13,061	9
Luton PCT	3,840	7	3,595	7
Manchester PCT	12,114	9	10,509	8
Medway PCT	4,427	7	3,985	7
Mid Essex PCT	5,811	6	4,934	5

Table 1. Estimate of alcohol-related admissions by primary care trust (PCT) of residence for 2008-09 and 2009-10

	2009-10		*2008-09*	
PCT of residence	*Estimate of alcohol-related admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*	*Estimate of alcohol-related admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*
Middlesbrough PCT	4,497	10	3,858	8
Milton Keynes PCT	4,574	7	3,316	5
Newcastle PCT	7,622	9	7,927	9
Newham PCT	4,636	6	3,956	5
Norfolk PCT	15,354	7	14,080	7
North East Essex PCT	5,124	7	3,952	6
North East Lincolnshire Care Trust Plus	3,790	8	2,885	6
North Lancashire Teaching PCT	7,468	7	6,858	7
North Lincolnshire PCT	3,724	8	2,986	6
North Somerset PCT	4,644	8	4,579	8
North Staffordshire PCT	4,165	7	4,191	7
North Tyneside PCT	6,302	9	5,732	8
North Yorkshire and York PCT	14,813	7	12,671	6
Northamptonshire Teaching PCT	12,596	7	10,553	6
Northumberland Care Trust	8,236	8	7,491	8
Nottingham City PCT	6,118	8	5,477	7
Nottinghamshire County Teaching PCT	13,879	7	12,155	7
Oldham PCT	5,155	8	4,557	7
Oxfordshire PCT	7,881	6	7,132	5
Peterborough PCT	3,999	8	3,502	8
Plymouth Teaching PCT	6,266	9	5,438	8
Portsmouth City Teaching PCT	4,205	8	3,914	8
Redbridge PCT	4,461	7	3,899	7
Redcar and Cleveland PCT	4,151	9	3,551	8
Richmond and Twickenham PCT	2,556	7	2,224	6
Rotherham PCT	5,661	6	4,985	6
Salford PCT	7,230	9	6,147	8
Sandwell PCT	8,552	9	6,962	7
Sefton PCT	7,883	9	6,699	8
Sheffield PCT	10,011	6	8,880	6
Shropshire County PCT	4,428	6	4,617	6
Solihull Care Trust	3,605	6	3,168	6
Somerset PCT	9,887	7	9,279	6
South Birmingham PCT	6,840	8	6,447	8
South East Essex PCT	7,853	9	6,930	8
South Gloucestershire PCT	5,222	8	4,781	7
South Staffordshire PCT	11,657	7	10,491	6
South Tyneside PCT	4,611	9	3,961	8
South West Essex PCT	6,203	6	5,495	6
Southampton City PCT	3,546	6	3,265	5
Southwark PCT	3,710	5	3,262	5
Stockport PCT	6,649	8	5,780	7
Stockton-on-Tees Teaching PCT	4,959	8	4,390	8
Stoke on Trent PCT	5,856	7	5,785	8
Suffolk PCT	12,108	8	8,982	6
Sunderland Teaching PCT	8,352	9	7,589	8
Surrey PCT	18,898	7	16,055	7
Sutton and Merton PCT	6,136	7	5,051	6
Swindon PCT	3,551	7	3,060	6
Tameside and Glossop PCT	6,602	9	6,001	8
Telford and Wrekin PCT	2,460	6	2,594	6
Torbay Care Trust	3,430	9	3,342	8
Tower Hamlets PCT	2,996	6	2,333	5
Trafford PCT	4,734	7	4,237	7
Wakefield District PCT	6,167	7	5,239	6
Walsall Teaching PCT	6,304	9	5,855	8
Waltham Forest PCT	4,487	7	3,447	6
Wandsworth PCT	3,882	6	3,375	6
Warrington PCT	5,348	9	4,615	8
Warwickshire PCT	10,493	8	9,352	7
West Essex PCT	5,298	7	4,935	7
West Hertfordshire PCT	8,313	6	7,041	5

Table 1: Estimate of alcohol-related admissions by primary care trust (PCT) of residence for 2008-09 and 2009-10

	2009-10		2008-09	
PCT of residence	*Estimate of alcohol-related admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*	*Estimate of alcohol-related admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*
West Kent PCT	10,416	7	9,019	6
West Sussex PCT	15,161	8	14,001	7
Western Cheshire PCT	5,470	7	4,870	7
Westminster PCT	3,549	7	2,909	6
Wiltshire PCT	7,970	7	7,446	7
Wirral PCT	8,708	9	8,688	9
Wolverhampton City PCT	4,839	7	[illegible]	6
Worcestershire PCT	11,494	8	11,024	8
Unknown	9,386	5	9,660	4
Residents of England	1,056,962	7	945,470	7

Table 2: Count of wholly attributable alcohol admissions by PCT of residence for 2008-09 and 2009-10

	2009-10		2008-09	
PCT of residence	*Count of wholly attributable alcohol admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*	*Count of wholly attributable alcohol admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT	2,652	3	2,355	2
Barking and Dagenham PCT	718	2	635	1
Barnet PCT	960	1	772	1
Barnsley PCT	1,213	2	1,047	1
Bassetlaw PCT	626	2	521	2
Bath and North East Somerset PCT	714	2	784	2
Bedfordshire PCT	1,322	1	1,201	1
Berkshire East PCT	1,168	1	1,154	1
Berkshire West PCT	1,028	1	1,070	1
Bexley Care Trust	667	1	461	1
Birmingham East and North PCT	2,107	2	1,980	2
Blackburn With Darwen PCT	1,403	3	1,025	2
Blackpool PCT	1,475	3	1,252	2
Bolton PCT	1,595	2	1,500	2
Bournemouth and Poole Teaching PCT	1,888	2	1,457	1
Bradford and Airedale Teaching PCT	3,015	2	2,794	2
Brent Teaching PCT	1,158	2	980	1
Brighton and Hove City PCT	2,083	3	2,291	4
Bristol PCT	3,254	3	2,971	2
Bromley PCT	1,048	1	1,058	1
Buckinghamshire PCT	945	1	797	1
Bury PCT	1,062	2	1,159	2
Calderdale PCT	1,240	2	988	2
Cambridgeshire PCT	2,690	2	2,415	2
Camden PCT	1,215	2	1,215	2
Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT	2,604	2	2,369	2
Central Lancashire PCT	3,328	2	2,910	2
City and Hackney Teaching PCT	1,254	2	966	2
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly PCT	2,664	2	2,552	2
County Durham PCT	3,677	2	3,334	2
Coventry Teaching PCT	2,101	2	2,013	2
Croydon PCT	1,364	2	1,180	1
Cumbria Teaching PCT	2,757	2	2,555	2
Darlington PCT	680	2	641	2
Derby City PCT	1,813	2	1,883	2
Derbyshire County PCT	3,457	2	3,204	2
Devon PCT	3,372	2	3,149	1
Doncaster PCT	1,326	2	1,212	1
Dorset PCT	1,486	1	1,346	1
Dudley PCT	1,518	2	1,195	1
Ealing PCT	1,715	2	1,621	2
East and North Hertfordshire PCT	1,151	1	987	1
East Lancashire Teaching PCT	2,897	2	2,160	2
East Riding of Yorkshire PCT	1,180	1	975	1
East Sussex Downs and Weald PCT	1,309	1	1,249	1
Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT	2,725	2	2,594	1
Enfield PCT	753	1	620	1

Table 2: Count of wholly attributable alcohol admissions by PCT of residence for 2008-09 and 2009-10

	2009-10		2008-09	
PCT of residence	*Count of wholly attributable alcohol admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*	*Count of wholly attributable alcohol admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*
Gateshead PCT	1,966	4	1,968	4
Gloucestershire PCT	2,250	1	1,900	1
Great Yarmouth and Waveney PCT	1,015	2	908	2
Greenwich Teaching PCT	836	1	776	1
Halton and St Helens PCT	2,938	3	2,823	3
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	1,179	3	1,089	3
Hampshire PCT	4,110	1	3,844	1
Haringey Teaching PCT	947	2	831	1
Harrow PCT	593	1	537	1
Hartlepool PCT	708	2	572	2
Hastings and Rother PCT	956	2	936	2
Havering PCT	682	1	564	1
Heart of Birmingham Teaching PCT	2,083	3	1,951	3
Herefordshire PCT	597	1	568	1
Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale PCT	1,812	3	1,723	3
Hillingdon PCT	1,224	2	1,029	1
Hounslow PCT	1,287	2	1,172	2
Hull Teaching PCT	1,930	2	1,539	2
Isle of Wight NHS PCT	432	2	365	1
Islington PCT	1,184	2	987	2
Kensington and Chelsea PCT	701	2	650	2
Kingston PCT	539	2	437	1
Kirklees PCT	1,775	2	1,540	1
Knowsley PCT	1,586	3	1,518	3
Lambeth PCT	1,351	2	1,227	2
Leeds PCT	4,883	2	4,300	2
Leicester City PCT	2,319	2	2,267	2
Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT	2,469	1	2,203	1
Lewisham PCT	1,130	1	1,154	2
Lincolnshire Teaching PCT	2,432	1	2,052	1
Liverpool PCT	5,645	4	5,276	4
Luton PCT	848	2	765	1
Manchester PCT	4,701	3	3,886	3
Medway PCT	898	1	867	2
Mid Essex PCT	833	1	794	1
Middlesbrough PCT	1,537	3	1,334	3
Milton Keynes PCT	1,020	2	703	1
Newcastle PCT	2,105	3	2,309	3
Newham PCT	1,133	1	970	1
Norfolk PCT	2,530	1	2,350	1
North East Essex PCT	989	1	671	1
North East Lincolnshire Care Trust Plus	685	2	458	1
North Lancashire Teaching PCT	1,806	2	1,690	2
North Lincolnshire PCT	592	1	492	1
North Somerset PCT	1,088	2	986	2
North Staffordshire PCT	897	1	832	1
North Tyneside PCT	1,703	2	1,496	2
North Yorkshire and York PCT	3,123	1	2,809	1
Northamptonshire Teaching PCT	2,552	1	2,324	1
Northumberland Care Trust	1,875	2	1,745	2
Nottingham City PCT	2,077	3	1,832	2
Nottinghamshire County Teaching PCT	2,913	2	2,535	1
Oldham PCT	1,405	2	1,316	2
Oxfordshire PCT	2,061	1	1,786	1
Peterborough PCT	988	2	806	2
Plymouth Teaching PCT	1,626	2	1,189	2
Portsmouth City Teaching PCT	1,594	3	1,365	3
Redbridge PCT	900	1	863	1
Redcar and Cleveland PCT	1,073	2	964	2
Richmond and Twickenham PCT	644	2	515	1
Rotherham PCT	1,207	1	1,185	1
Salford PCT	2,746	4	2,244	3

Table 2. Count of wholly attributable alcohol admissions by PCT of residence for 2008-09 and 2009-10

	2009-10		2008-09	
PCT of residence	*Count of wholly attributable alcohol admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*	*Count of wholly attributable alcohol admissions*	*Percentage of finished admissions*
Sandwell PCT	2,206	2	1,631	2
Sefton PCT	2,399	3	1,929	2
Sheffield PCT	2,799	2	2,412	2
Shropshire County PCT	867	1	922	1
Solihull Care Trust	912	2	818	2
Somerset PCT	1,709	1	1,758	1
South Birmingham PCT	2,046	2	1,921	2
South East Essex PCT	1,169	1	985	1
South Gloucestershire PCT	1,002	1	917	1
South Staffordshire PCT	2,204	1	1,832	1
South Tyneside PCT	1,284	2	1,056	2
South West Essex PCT	849	1	802	1
Southampton City PCT	1,143	2	1,057	2
Southwark PCT	1,208	2	1,150	2
Stockport PCT	2,135	3	1,828	2
Stockton-on-Tees Teaching PCT	1,294	2	1,059	2
Stoke on Trent PCT	1,651	2	1,409	2
Suffolk PCT	2,117	1	1,643	1
Sunderland Teaching PCT	2,838	3	2,514	3
Surrey PCT	3,417	1	2,821	1
Sutton and Merton PCT	1,520	2	1,179	1
Swindon PCT	869	2	781	1
Tameside and Glossop PCT	2,118	3	1,781	3
Telford and Wrekin PCT	683	2	707	2
Torbay Care Trust	1,014	3	1,048	3
Tower Hamlets PCT	890	2	729	2
Trafford PCT	1,273	2	1,149	2
Wakefield District PCT	1,839	2	1,440	2
Walsall Teaching PCT	1,417	2	1,281	2
Waltham Forest PCT	1,022	2	900	2
Wandsworth PCT	1,218	2	940	2
Warrington PCT	1,744	3	1,426	3
Warwickshire PCT	2,169	2	1,990	1
West Essex PCT	877	1	898	1
West Hertfordshire PCT	1,468	1	1,358	1
West Kent PCT	2,186	1	1,748	1
West Sussex PCT	3,064	2	2,935	1
Western Cheshire PCT	1,394	2	1,158	2
Westminster PCT	1,204	2	932	2
Wiltshire PCT	1,508	1	1,479	1
Wirral PCT	3,460	3	3,431	3
Wolverhampton City PCT	1,029	1	925	1
Worcestershire PCT	2,651	2	2,570	2
Unknown	7,295	4	7,191	3
Residents of England	265,246	2	237,820	2

Notes:

1. PCT figures are rounded and do not necessarily sum to the independently rounded national figure.

2. *Estimate of alcohol-related admissions.*

The number of alcohol-related admissions is based on the methodology developed by the North West Public Health Observatory (NWPHO), which uses 48 indicators for alcohol-related illnesses, determining the proportion of a wide range of diseases and injuries that can be partly attributed to alcohol as well as those that are, by definition, wholly attributable to alcohol. The application of the NWPHO methodology was updated in summer 2010 and is now available directly from HES. As such, information about episodes estimated to be alcohol related may be slightly different from previously published data.

3. *Finished admission episodes.*

A finished admission episode (FAE) is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. FAEs are counted against the year in which the admission episode finishes. Admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

4. *SHA/PCT of residence.*

The strategic health authority (SHA) or primary care trust (PCT) containing the patient's normal home address. This does not necessarily reflect where the patient was treated as they may have travelled to another SHA/PCT for treatment.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), the NHS Information Centre for health and social care.

Kidneys: Dialysis Machines

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms will be in place to ensure that kidney dialysis patients *(a)* receive their choice of treatment at the hospital they have selected and *(b)* receive their choice of treatment within an appropriate period of time. [32006]

Mr Simon Burns: We are committed to extending choice for all national health service patients and service users, including those who need dialysis treatment. We are currently consulting on proposals for giving all patients and service users greater choice and control over their care and we will publish our response along with more detailed policy proposals early next year.

For all patients with established renal failure, fully informed choice of all appropriate treatment modalities, together with timely preparation, should be the rule rather than the exception. This should include options for dialysis at home, as well as transplantation, or conservative management.

Dialysis services in Wales are a matter for the Welsh Assembly.

Nervous System: Stem Cells

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the use of stem cells to repair injury in the central nervous system; and if he will make a statement. [31660]

Mr Simon Burns: The Department, through the National Institute for Health Research, funds 12 Biomedical Research Centres and 16 Biomedical Research Units. These are currently undertaking a number of research projects on stem cells but none specifically on the use of stem cells to repair injury in the central nervous system.

Older People: Weather

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of elderly people who fall ill or die because of cold weather. [31782]

Anne Milton: Action aimed at tackling winter illness and deaths in the elderly include winter fuel payments and influenza vaccinations. The Government have also launched their annual Keep Warm Keep Well Campaign for 2010-11 which provides advice on staying warm over the winter and staying in touch with people who may be vulnerable during cold weather, including the elderly, in order to reduce illness and deaths. As part of our further work we are working with the Met Office and public health champions in a number of regions to improve the way we communicate with people in local settings to accurately predict cold weather and provide an appropriate and effective response.

Prescriptions

Eric Ollerenshaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions were issued for each *(a)* benzodiazepine and *(b)* Z-drug in 2009-10. [31600]

Mr Simon Burns: The information requested is shown in the following tables.

Table 1: Number of benzodiazepine prescription items written in the United Kingdom and dispensed in the community in England in the financial year 2009-10, as classified as hypnotics and anxiolytics in British National Formulary (BNF) Section 4.1.1 and 4.1.2

BNF chemical name	*Prescription items (thousand)*
Alprazolam	[1]
Chlordiazepoxide Hydrochloride	232.6
Diazepam	5,051.7
Flurazepam Hydrochloride	[1]
Loprazolam Mesilate	94.8
Lorazepam	942.0
Lormetazepam	69.4
Nitrazepam	1,086.1
Oxazepam	170.1
Temazepam	2,934.8
Total for BNF Section 4.1	10,581.4

[1] less than 50 prescription items dispensed.

Source:

Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) system

Table 2: Number of benzodiazepine prescription items written in the UK and dispensed in the community in England in the financial year 2009-10, as classified as antiepileptic drugs in British National Formulary (BNF) section 4.8.1 and 8.8.2

BNF chemical name	*Prescriptions items (thousand)*
Clobazam	176.5
Clonazepam	589.2
Midazolam	29.9
Total for BNF Section 4.8	795.7

Source:

Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) system

Table 3: Number of benzodiazepine prescription items written in the UK and dispensed in the community in England in the financial year 2009-10, as classified as anaesthesia drugs in British National Formulary (BNF) section 15.1.4

BNF chemical name	*Prescription items (thousand)*
Midazolam Hydrochloride	71.6
Total for BNF Section 15.1	71.6

Source:

Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) system

Table 4: Number of 'Z-drug' prescription items written in the UK and dispensed in the community in England in the financial year 2009-10, as classified as hypnotics drugs in British National Formulary (BNF) section 4.1.1

BNF chemical name	*Prescription items (thousand)*
Zaleplon	26.6
Zolpidem Tartrate	717.0
Zopiclone	5,072.0
Total for 'Z-drugs'	5,815.6

Source:

Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) system

Primary Care Trusts: Prisoners

Dr Thérèse Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 722W, on drugs: prisons, how many prisoners received the treatment in each *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* prison in each of the last three financial years. [32360]

Paul Burstow: Data on the number of prisoners receiving integrated drug treatment systems services (IDTS) in each primary care trust are not collected by the Department.

Some data are held centrally in respect of IDTS services delivered in individual prisons and, where this is available, are shown in the following tables.

Integrated Drug Treatment Systems provision in National Offender Management Service (NOMS) operated Prisons in England, 2007-10

	Year 2007-08		
Establishment name	*Detox programmes*	*Extended prescribing programmes*	*Total 2007-08*
Acklington			0
Albany			0
Altcourse	861	0	861
Ashfield	46	9	55
Ashwell			0
Askham Grange			0
Aylesbury	10	0	10
Bedford	594	0	594
Belmarsh	776	90	866
Birmingham	4,359	170	4,529
Blakenhurst	1,829	87	1,916
Blantyre House			0
Blundeston			0
Brinsford	240	124	364
Bristol	1,033	337	1,370
Brixton	1,570	307	1,877
Brockhill			0
Bronzefield	1,168	0	1,168
Buckley Hall			
Bullingdon	466	492	958
Bullwood Hall			
Camp Hill			
Canterbury			
Cardiff	737	104	841
Castington	50	0	50
Channings Wood			
Chelmsford	745	0	745
Coldingley	0	5	5
Cookham Wood	0	2	2
Dartmoor			
Deerbolt			
Doncaster	1,727	0	1,727
Dorchester	371	203	574
Dovegate			
Dover			
Downview			
Drake Hall			
Durham	891	1,251	2,142
East Sutton Park			
Eastwood Park	1,162	342	1,504
Edmunds Hill			
Elmley	843	408	1,251
Erlestoke			
Everthorpe			
Exeter	854	23	877
Featherstone			
Feltham	250	8	258
Ford			
Forest Bank	898	16	914
Foston Hall	450	446	896
Frankland			
Full Sutton			
Garth			
Gartree			
Glen Parva	420	37	457
Gloucester	624	302	926
Grendon			
Guys Marsh			
Haslar			

Integrated Drug Treatment Systems provision in National Offender Management Service (NOMS) operated Prisons in England, 2007-10

	Year 2007-08		
Establishment name	*Detox programmes*	*Extended prescribing programmes*	*Total 2007-08*
Haverigg			
Hewell Grange			
High Down	808	384	1,192
Highpoint			
Hindley			
Hollesley Bay			
Holloway	1,131	0	1,131
Holme House	1,120	502	1,622
Hull	1,113	158	1,271
Huntercombe			
Kennet			
Kingston			
Kirkham			
Kirklevington			
Lancaster			
Lancaster Farms			
Latchmere House			
Leeds	1,115	2,447	3,562
Leicester	943	0	943
Lewes	582	127	709
Leyhill			
Lincoln	1,279	261	1,540
Lindholme			
Littlehey			
Liverpool	1,160	360	1,520
Long Lartin			
Low Newton	131	224	355
Lowdham Grange	171	45	216
Maidstone			
Manchester	1,242	110	1,352
Moorland			
Morton Hall			
Mount			
New Hall	1,217	532	1,749
North Sea Camp			
Northallerton			
Norwich	695	37	732
Nottingham	855	247	1,102
Onley			
Parc	324	40	364
Parkhurst	70	11	81
Pentonville	1,562	204	1,766
Peterborough			
Portland			
Preston	1,280	0	1,280
Ranby			
Reading	73	23	96
Risley			
Rochester			
Rye Hill			
Send			
Shepton Mallet			
Shrewsbury	825	10	835
Stafford	71	24	95
Standford Hill	5	8	13
Stocken			
Stoke Heath	50	0	50
Styal	199	930	1,129

Integrated Drug Treatment Systems provision in National Offender Management Service (NOMS) operated Prisons in England, 2007-10

Year 2007-08

Establishment name	*Detox programmes*	*Extended prescribing programmes*	*Total 2007-08*
Sudbury	0	1	1
Swaleside	56	7	63
Swansea	622	184	806
Swinfen Hall	—	—	—
Thorn Cross	—	—	—
Usk Prescoed	—	—	—
Verne	—	—	—
Wakefield	—	—	—
Wandsworth	1,282	818	2,100
Warren Hill	—	—	—
Wayland	—	—	—
Wealstun	—	—	—
Wellingborough	—	—	—
Werrington	—	—	—
Wetherby	31	0	31
Whatton	—	—	—
Whitemoor	—	—	—
Winchester	604	14	618
Wolds	—	—	—
Woodhill	1,231	0	1,231
Wormwood Scrubs	1,470	47	1,517
Wymott	—	—	—
Total	46,291	12,518	58,809

2008-09

Establishment name	*Detox programmes*	*Extended prescribing programmes*	*Total 2008-09*
Acklington	—	—	—
Albany	—	—	—
Altcourse	561	0	561
Ashfield	22	0	22
Ashwell	—	—	0
Askham Grange	—	—	0
Aylesbury	10	0	10
Bedford	787	0	787
Belmarsh	1,909	676	2,585
Birmingham	3,883	796	4,679
Blantyre House	—	—	—
Blundeston	—	—	—
Brinsford	215	237	452
Bristol	1,110	874	1,984
Brixton	1,801	988	2,789
Bronzefield	1,301	0	1,301
Buckley Hall	—	—	—
Bullingdon	566	606	1,172
Bullwood Hall	—	—	—
Camp Hill	—	—	—
Canterbury	—	—	—
Cardiff	828	0	828
Castington	30	0	30
Channings Wood	—	—	—
Chelmsford	781	392	1,173
Coldingley	0	17	17
Cookham Wood	—	—	—
Dartmoor	—	—	—
Deerbolt	—	—	—
Doncaster	2,139	199	2,338
Dorchester	211	184	395
Dovegate	0	0	0
Dover	0	0	0
Downview	0	0	0
Drake Hall	0	0	0
Durham	782	1,059	1,841
East Sutton Park	0	0	0
Eastwood Park	654	676	1,330
Edmunds Hill	3	11	14
Elmley	479	373	852
Erlestoke	0	0	0
Everthorpe	0	0	0
Exeter	447	196	643
Featherstone	34	0	34
Feltham	184	24	208
Ford	—	—	—
Forest Bank	908	0	908
Foston Hall	400	351	751
Frankland	—	—	—
Full Sutton	—	—	—
Garth	—	—	—
Gartree	—	—	—
Glen Parva	342	46	388
Gloucester	225	301	526
Grendon	—	—	—
Guys Marsh	—	—	—
Haslar	—	—	—
Haverigg	—	—	—
Hewell	1,583	226	1,809
High Down	1,001	809	1,810
Highpoint	—	—	—
Hindley	—	—	—
Hollesley Bay	—	—	—
Holloway	952	250	1,202
Holme House	790	559	1,349
Hull	1,315	157	1,472
Huntercombe	—	—	—
Kennet	—	—	—
Kingston	—	—	—
Kirkham	—	—	—
Kirklevington	—	—	—
Lancaster	—	—	—
Lancaster Farms	—	—	—
Latchmere House	—	—	—
Leeds	1,306	2,225	3,531
Leicester	964	0	964
Lewes	515	351	866
Leyhill	0	0	0
Lincoln	1,091	503	1,594
Lindholme	—	—	—
Littlehey	—	—	—
Liverpool	759	539	1,298
Long Lartin	16	0	16
Low Newton	3	359	362
Lowdham Grange	387	76	463
Maidstone	0	0	0
Manchester	1,211	73	1,284
Moorland	—	—	—
Morton Hall	—	—	—

	2008-09		
Establishment name	*Detox programmes*	*Extended prescribing programmes*	*Total 2008-09*
Mount			
New Hall	923	429	1,352
North Sea Camp			
Northallerton			
Norwich	899	81	980
Nottingham	448	634	1,082
Onley			
Parc	342	54	396
Parkhurst	111	19	130
Pentonville	1,361	385	1,746
Peterborough			
Portland			
Preston	1,159	496	1,655
Ranby			
Reading	36	8	44
Risley	12	10	22
Rochester			
Rye Hill			
Send			
Shepton Mallet			
Shrewsbury	960	0	960
Stafford	30	68	98
Standford Hill	15	37	52
Stocken			
Stoke Heath	66	0	66
Styal	226	896	1,122
Sudbury	0	0	0
Swaleside	77	24	101
Swansea	853	217	1,070
Swinfen Hall			
Thorn Cross			
Usk Prescoed			
Verne			
Wakefield	4	2	6
Wandsworth	1,566	1,731	3,297
Warren Hill			
Wayland			
Wealstun			
Wellingborough			
Werrington			
Wetherby	25	3	28
Whatton			
Whitemoor			
Winchester	827	24	851
Wolds			
Woodhill	1,229	248	1,477
Wormwood Scrubs	1,461	133	1,594
Wymott			
Total	45,135	19,632	64,767

	2009-10		
Establishment name	*Extended*	*Initial*	*Total 2009-10*
Acklington			
Albany			
Altcourse	530	656	1,186
Ashfield		31	31
Ashwell			
Askham Grange			
Aylesbury		26	26
Bedford	297	332	629
Belmarsh	537	1,055	1,592
Birmingham	1,242	2,556	3,798
Blantyre House			
Blundeston			
Brinsford	216	140	356
Bristol	818	862	1,680
Brixton	844	1,370	2,214
Bronzefield		1,106	1,106
Buckley Hall			
Bullingdon	476	548	1,024
Bullwood Hall			
Bure			
Camp Hill			
Canterbury			
Cardiff		870	870
Castington		34	34
Channings Wood			
Chelmsford	489	497	986
Coldingley	28	4	32
Cookham Wood			
Dartmoor			
Deerbolt			
Doncaster	722	1,721	2,443
Dorchester	236	194	430
Dovegate			
Dover			
Downview			
Drake Hall			
Durham	765	1,049	1,814
East Sutton Park			
Eastwood Park	764	327	1,091
Edmunds Hill	70	70	140
Elmley	418	476	894
Erlestoke			
Everthorpe			
Exeter	552	529	1,081
Featherstone			
Feltham	18	94	112
Ford			
Forest Bank	54	743	797
Foston Hall	246	276	522
Frankland			
Full Sutton			
Garth			
Gartree			
Glen Parva	33	258	291
Gloucester	395	183	578
Grendon			
Guys Marsh			
Haslar			
Haverigg			
Hewell	155	493	648
High Down	738	971	1,709
Highpoint			
Hindley			
Hollesley Bay			
Holloway	413	475	888
Holme House	802	419	1,221
Hull	120	1,239	1,359

Establishment name	*2009-10*		
	Extended	*Initial*	*Total 2009-10*
Huntercombe			
Kennet			
Kingston			
Kirkham			
Kirklevington			
Lancaster			
Lancaster Farms			
Latchmere House			
Leeds	1,028	476	1,504
Leicester		867	867
Lewes	372	394	766
Leyhill			
Lincoln	834	748	1,582
Lindholme			
Littlehey			
Liverpool	831	477	1,308
Long Lartin		20	20
Low Newton	345		345
Lowdham Grange	57	707	764
Maidstone			
Manchester	189	1,065	1,254
Moorland			
Morton Hall			
Mount			
New Hall	296	476	772
North Sea Camp			
Northallerton			
Norwich	292	922	1,214
Nottingham	530	373	903
Onley			
Parc	190	320	510
Parkhurst	59	93	152
Pentonville	816	1,043	1,859
Peterborough	946	983	1,929
Portland			
Preston	986	1,226	2,212
Ranby			
Reading	36	17	53
Risley			
Rochester			
Rye Hill			
Send			
Shepton Mallet			
Shrewsbury	55	535	590
Stafford	244	67	311
Standford Hill	29	14	43
Stocken			
Stoke Heath		26	26
Styal	711	815	1,526
Sudbury			
Swaleside	30	28	58
Swansea	323	936	1,259
Swinfen Hall			
Thorn Cross			
Usk Prescoed			
Verne			
Wakefield	10	15	25
Wandsworth	1,830	1,490	3,320
Warren Hill			
Wayland			
Wealstun			
Wellingborough			
Werrington			
Wetherby	2	23	25
Whatton			
Whitemoor			
Winchester	41	781	822
Wolds	4	18	22
Woodhill	343	700	1,043
Wormwood Scrub	337	1,064	1,401
Wymott			
Total	23,744	36,323	60,067

Rape: Victim Support Schemes

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding his Department allocated for the provision for providing support in the NHS to victims of rape in each year since 2005; and what such funding he plans to provide in each year of the spending review period. [32041]

Anne Milton: Support for victims of rape and sexual violence are provided by a range of universal and specialist services, such as Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), some of which are commissioned by primary care trusts (PCTs). PCT recurrent revenue allocations are not broken down by policy or service area. Once allocated, it is for PCTs to commission the services they require to meet the healthcare needs of their local populations, taking account of both local and national priorities.

In addition to PCT allocations, the Department has also funded voluntary and charitable organisations to deliver a range of projects that support victims of rape and sexual violence. This includes:

£1.6 million to support the improvement of SARC services nationally, and to improve partnership working;

£1.4 million to support the development of SARCs across the country through a dedicated Sexual Violence National Support Team;

a £503,000 contribution to a cross-Government sexual violence fund for the voluntary sector;

a development grant of £200,000 to support the development of a 'Women's Health and Equality Consortium' that brings together women's organisations working across a range of issues affecting organisations in the sector. The consortium includes Rape Crisis and FORWARD who will focus on the sustainability and support for the sexual violence sector; and

£439,530 to fund specialist services for victims of violence and abuse run by voluntary and charitable organisations through the Innovation, Excellence and Service Development (IESD) fund. Applications for the 2011-12 IESD fund are currently being assessed.

Rehabilitation

Tracey Crouch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in *(a)* Chatham and Aylesford constituency, *(b)* West Kent Primary Care Trust and *(c)* Medway Primary Care Trust have been in abstinence-based rehabilitative treatment in each year since 2005. [31105]

Anne Milton: Information is not available in the format requested.

The number of individuals receiving different forms of treatment from the Drug and Alcohol Action Team partnerships in Medway and in Kent, as recorded on the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS) database, is shown in the following table.

Partnership	*Intervention type*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*	*2008-09*	*2009-10*
Kent	In-patient	69	76	127	158	125
	Residential	52	55	50	59	39
	Prescribing	1,365	1,511	1,877	2,159	2,255
	Psychosocial intervention	1,202	837	1,015	1,270	1,194
	Structured day programme	352	378	678	813	765
	Other structured intervention	356	395	1,025	1,193	986
Medway	In-patient	44	44	43	41	33
	Residential	6	*	*	*	*
	Prescribing	430	486	608	673	680
	Psychosocial intervention	109	71	61	126	118
	Structured day programme	[1]	24	94	169	160
	Other structured intervention	114	175	142	150	201

Notes

1. In line with national statistics protocols, numbers for residential intervention in Medway have been suppressed because they are five or less.

2. NDTMS does not collect information separately for West Kent primary care trust (PCT), but activity is reported along with activity in Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT.

Source:

National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse

Social Services: Carers Grant

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether *(a)* the carers grant and *(b)* other revenue grants provided by his Department for adult social care will continue to be made between 2011 and 2015; and what estimate he has made of the likely change in the level of each such grants 2010-11 levels in each such year. [32150]

Paul Burstow: The funding for all existing departmental revenue grants for adult social care has been maintained, and will rise in line with inflation over the spending review period. This includes the funding that is currently in the carers grant. We have also allocated an additional £1 billion by 2014-15, through local government, to support social care. In order to support local flexibility and to reduce administrative burdens, these funding streams will go to authorities through the general local government formula grant.

The value of the social care grant funding which is rolling into formula grant is as follows:

£ million

	2010-11	*2011-12*	*2012-13*	*2013-14*	*2014-15*
AIDS Support	25.50	27.70	30.30	33.10	36.20
Preserved Rights	235.40	228.84	221.68	215.11	209.80
On-going Personal Social Services[1]	752.34	767.02	784.43	804.98	826.31
Re-cycled Personal Social Services[2]	303.00	318.15	335.75	354.91	373.11
New Personal Social Services Funding	[3]	530.00	930.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Total	1,316.24	1,871.71	2,302.16	2,408.10	2,445.42

[1] Previously formed from: Mental Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Learning Disability Development Fund, Mental Capacity Act and Independent Mental Capacity Advocate Service, Carers, Adult Social Care Workforce, LINKs.

[2] Previously formed from: Social Care Reform, Learning Disability Campus Closure Programme, Stroke Strategy.

[3] New.

In addition, the Department will be allocating the learning disabilities and health reform grant to local authorities. This is a new grant, reflecting the transfer of commissioning responsibility for specialist services for people with learning disabilities from primary care trusts to local authorities. This grant will be worth £1,325.58 million in 2011-12, and £1,356.99 million in 2012-13. Allocations for 2013-14 and 2014-15 will be determined in due course.

Tuberculosis

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to reduce the variation in the rate of tuberculosis between local authority areas. [31683]

Anne Milton: The Department and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence have published guidance to support the national health service in commissioning and providing effective services to prevent, diagnose and treat tuberculosis (TB).

The Department has funded TB Alert, the United Kingdom's national TB charity, to raise awareness of TB among the public and primary health care professionals to help improve TB detection and treatment completion.

The Department has also funded a "Find and Treat" outreach programme in London, to work alongside local TB services to detect and treat cases of TB among the homeless and other vulnerable groups.

TRANSPORT

Aircraft: Inspections

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* UK-registered and *(b)* foreign-registered aircraft were inspected by the Civil Aviation Authority in each of the last 12 months; what the country of registration was of each such foreign-registered aircraft; where each such inspection took place; and whether prior notice of inspection was given in each instance. [31935]

Mrs Villiers: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) inspections of UK registered aircraft form part of a pre-planned comprehensive monitoring programme that is applied to each UK owner/operator and therefore the CAA has no need to record these data centrally. The CAA carried out approximately 790 airworthiness inspections and 24 operational ramp inspections on UK registered aircraft during the last 12 months.

Other elements of the monitoring programme, such as flight inspections, may also include an element of aircraft inspection.

The CAA also inspects foreign registered aircraft on behalf of the Department for Transport as part of the European Safety Assessment of Foreign Aircraft programme. No prior notice of such inspections is given. The number of inspections conducted on foreign aircraft in each of the last 12 months is detailed in the following table:

Month	*Number of Inspections*
2009	
December	116
2010	
January	128
February	97
March	74
April	87
May	111
June	113
July	104
August	72
September	110
October	73
November	69

As of 16 December the CAA had inspected aircraft from 92 states or territories in 2010. The inspections took place at 36 aerodromes across the UK. Details of the states of registration of the aircraft inspected in 2010 and the aerodromes at which those inspections were conducted have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

British Cycling: Roads

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what meetings his Department has had with British Cycling to discuss the future of cycle racing on the roads. [322[illegible]]

Norman Baker: Ministers and officials have met British Cycling a number of times since May 2009. The most recent meetings are as follows:

Officials in the Department's Road User Safety Division had a meeting with British Cycling on 26 May 2010, and are due to meet them again in early January 2011.

I had a meeting with British Cycling on 28 June 2010 and am due to meet them again in mid-January.

Officials in The Traffic Signs and Signals Branch had a meeting with British Cycling on 13 July 2010.

Ministers have also since May 2010 had useful meetings with other cycle groups to discuss this issue.

Buses: Antisocial Behaviour

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance his Department has issued to bus operators on addressing antisocial behaviour on services. [31377]

Norman Baker: In 2005 and 2006, the Department for Transport issued practical guidance to bus operators on reducing the risks of violence, antisocial behaviour and criminal damage on board, as well as a series of guidelines for operators on personal security. The documents are archived on the internet at the following addresses:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/buses/buscrime/
protectingbusandcoachcrewsb

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://
www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/crime/personalsecurity/
getonboardpsguidance

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://
www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/crime/personalsecurity/
personalsecurityguidelines/

Earlier this year, the Department for Transport consulted on improving the bus journey experience through changes to the conduct regulations, which set out the duties of bus and coach drivers, inspectors and conductors, and passengers. A Government response to this consultation will be published in due course. The issue of driver training and conduct was discussed with bus operators at the July meeting of the Bus Partnership Forum, which I chair, and is on the agenda for the forum's meeting in January. The forum is made up of representatives of the bus industry, passenger transport executives, transport co-ordinating officers, passengers and disability groups.

Crossrail

Maria Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost to his Department of the extension by one year of the planned timetable for completion of the Crossrail scheme. [31028]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: The lengthening of the delivery programme for the central tunnel section of the Crossrail project has enabled substantial savings in the costs for the scheme.

Lengthening the construction programme does not increase the cost of the scheme to the Department for Transport.

Cycle Racing: Roads

Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress his Department has made on reviewing and redrafting the Cycle Racing on the Highways Regulations 1960; and if he will make a statement. [32217]

Norman Baker: Officials are currently considering a redraft of the Cycle Racing on the Highways Regulations 1960, taking into account the views of British Cycling and other cycling interest groups. I am keen to make progress on this matter.

Dartford-Thurrock Crossing: Tolls

Jackie Doyle-Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what consideration was given to lifting the Dartford Crossing tolls on 11 November 2010 following the closure of the Queen Elizabeth II bridge; [26276]

(2) on how many occasions the Dartford Crossing tolls have been suspended owing to congestion since 6 May 2010. [26277]

Mike Penning: The Queen Elizabeth II bridge was closed on 11 November because high winds created a safety hazard to all vehicles travelling over the bridge.

The delays were caused, not by the collection of charges but by the non-availability of the infrastructure. The southbound contra-flow (through the East Tunnel) and the queuing through the tunnel northbound (due to delays at J30/J31) both constrained traffic flows.

Subsequent to events on 11 November, we have been made aware of the significant delays experienced by drivers using local roads in and around Thurrock. We will learn from this experience and will consider how in the future we receive earlier warning of congestion on local roads.

Since 6 May 2010, the Dartford Crossing charges have been suspended on one occasion. This was on 6 August following a lorry fire on the Queen Elizabeth II bridge, which necessitated its closure because of smoke, clearance of the vehicle and debris on the road.

Departmental NDPBs

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much expenditure each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies has incurred on redundancy costs since 1 May 2010. [30907]

Norman Baker *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: Expenditure for redundancy costs for each of the Department's non-departmental public bodies reported since 1 May 2010, are:

	Redundancy costs since May 2010 (£)
Northern Lighthouse Board	5,266.21
Trinity Lighthouse	258,564.25

There has been no expenditure incurred on redundancy costs for the British Transport Police Authority, Renewable Fuels Agency, Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee, Directly Operated Railways Ltd, Directly Operated Railways Ltd, Passenger Focus, Traffic Commissioners and Deputies.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff employed by his Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31225]

Norman Baker: All London based staff employed by the Department for Transport and its seven executive agencies are paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage.

EU Law

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many EU directives are pending transposition into domestic legislation by his Department; and what estimate he has made of the cost of each such transposition. [27503]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport has 38 directives that are pending transposition into domestic legislation.

A full assessment of the cost of each item of legislation will be carried out once a final decision is reached on the method of transposition and implementation. This information will be published in impact assessments for each directive.

First Capital Connect: Overcrowding

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will review the level of overcrowding on First Capital Connect passenger rail services between Stevenage and Kings Cross; and if he will make a statement. [29640]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport does not hold detailed passenger count information for every station stop on individual services between Stevenage and King's Cross. The limited information that the Department holds for average critical loads on peak services arriving into and departing from King's Cross during spring 2010 indicates that trains on this line that stop at Stevenage have not been operating in excess of capacity. However, the information we have is not comprehensive, so it is possible that individual instances of over-crowding may be occurring.

The Office for Rail Regulation (ORR) publishes aggregate statistics on 'passengers in excess of capacity' in Table 2.4 in National Rail Trends (NRT), which can be found at:

http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/nav.2026

These figures were last updated in July 2010 for the autumn 2009 period.

Motorcycles: Licensing

Jim Fitzpatrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will implement the Third European Driving Licence Directive to allow novice motorcycle licence holders to progress through each licensing category stage via a training rather than a testing route; and if he will make a statement. [30998]

Mike Penning: The issue is being considered as part of the review of the motorcycle test announced on 8 June 2010.

Network Rail: Passengers

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the effects on passengers of the operation by train companies of different off-peak times; and if he will take steps to harmonise such times across the rail network. [31981]

Mrs Villiers: No assessment has been carried out by the Department for Transport on the effects on passengers of the operation by train companies of different off-peak times.

The franchise agreement allows individual train operators the flexibility to define what is 'off-peak' according to local conditions. We do not consider it appropriate to require all train operators to have the same off-peak periods because this could lead to many passengers being subject to restrictions at times when it was not necessary.

North East England

Mr Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which Ministers in his Department have visited the North East since their appointment. [31737]

Norman Baker: The Secretary of State for Transport and I have each visited the North East since our appointment.

Railways: Antisocial Behaviour

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many arrests were made for antisocial behaviour on trains in each year since 2007. [31602]

Mrs Villiers: This information is not held by the Department for Transport, but by the British Transport Police who can be contacted at 25 Camden Road, London, NW1 9LN or by e-mail at:

parliament@btp.pnn.police.uk

Railways: Disability

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will assess the accuracy of the information that train operating companies running services in London provide to Transport for London on the accessibility of their stations for disabled people. [27230]

Mrs Villiers: The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) provides comprehensive information on disabled access to stations via the National Rail Enquiries website.

However, in recognition of the importance of accurate information and assistance to disabled passengers, the Department for Transport has recently provided financial support to ATOC to carry out access audits of every station in Great Britain for use with the "Stations Made Easy" application, which launched in December 2009. Individual station operators are required to update this where facilities are upgraded, or are temporarily not available. New audits can be carried out where major changes are made.

Railways: Electrification

Alun Cairns: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to announce plans for the electrification of rail lines in South Wales. [32144]

Mrs Villiers: The Government will be in a position to make an announcement on further electrification of the Great Western Main Line once the review of the InterCity Express Programme is complete. It is expected that this will be in the new year.

Railways: Fares

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to issue guidance on the installation of Oyster card recharge points at rail stations outside Greater London. [30820]

Mrs Villiers: There are currently no plans to issue guidance on the installation of Oyster card top-up points at rail stations outside Greater London. Passengers can purchase top-ups on the internet and upload to their Oyster cards at station validators/gate lines. Within London, at all but a small number of stations, top-ups are available through passenger operated ticket vending machines (TVMs) or at local Transport for London Ticketstop Agents.

Railways: Finance

Maria Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on what date his Department received the Rail Value for Money Study interim submission by Sir Roy McNulty. [29969]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 13 December 2010]*: The Department for Transport received a draft of the Rail Value for Money Study interim submission in September 2010. This is in line with the announcement made on 14 June 2010, when my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced that he had asked for an acceleration of the study, so that Sir Roy McNulty could present his early findings in time to inform the Government's decisions on public spending in the autumn. The document was published on 7 December 2010, to coincide with the Government's announcement on franchising and the future structure of the rail industry.

Railways: Industrial Disputes

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport with reference to the answer of 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 4W, on train operating companies (compensation), when the last payment was made by Government to a train operating company for loss of revenue arising from a dispute with a trade union; and how much that payment was. [29126]

Mrs Villiers *[holding answer 7 December 2010]*: The information requested is commercially confidential.

Railways: Kent

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to reinstate recently closed train services linking Kent to the City of London. [31866]

Mrs Villiers: Department for Transport officials are working with Southeastern to assess the level of service provision to Maidstone. Any possible service changes will need to be affordable and provide value for money. It is hoped that this work will conclude before the end of February 2011.

Railways: South East Region

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he made of the performance of *(a)* Southeastern and *(b)* the previous operator for Mid Kent services between London and Maidstone over equivalent periods in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [30733]

Mrs Villiers: Southeastern's operational performance is reviewed by Department for Transport officials on a four weekly basis. This review looks across Southeastern's operations as a network. The Department does not hold information regarding the individual routes which Southeastern operates.

Network Rail is responsible for performance data for the rail industry. My hon. Friend may wish to contact Network Rail's chief executive at the following address for such information:

Peter Henderson
Acting Chief Executive
Network Rail
Kings Place
90 York Way
London, N1 9AG.

Railways: Standards

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of recent progress towards meeting targets to reduce rail delays caused by infrastructure work. [29269]

Mrs Villiers: Monitoring Network Rail's progress in reducing the delays caused by infrastructure work is the responsibility of the independent Office of Rail Regulation, which published its latest quarterly assessment of the company's performance on 1 December 2010.

Railways: Travel Information

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to ensure accurate travel information is provided to rail passengers; and whether this will require changes to the Train Service Information Database. [32054]

Mrs Villiers: Rail Franchise agreements require train operators to provide accurate information to passengers. As part of its Network Licence, Network Rail must ensure that timetables are available to passengers 12 weeks in advance of the date of operation, including any planned disruption. Compliance with the licence obligations is monitored and enforced by the Office of Rail Regulation.

Currently, the industry is developing a new train running information system which will be driven by the signalling system, and which will provide much more accurate and detailed information for passengers waiting at stations. This will be introduced progressively over the next three years.

Railways: Wales

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of the funding set out in his Department's Statement of Funds Available has been allocated to railways in Wales. [31611]

Mrs Villiers: As required by paragraph 1D(1)(b) of schedule 4 to the Railways Act 1993, the Department for Transport's Statement of Funds Available during the period 2009-10 to 2013-14 relates to railway activities in Great Britain as a whole. There is no separate allocation of the funds, by the Department, to Wales.

Rescue Services

Mrs Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consultations he has undertaken on his plans for search and rescue services; and if he will make a statement. [32106]

Mike Penning: I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made in the House on 16 December 2010, *Official Report,* columns 133-134WS, in which I announced the start of a consultation on the modernisation of the coastguard. During the consultation period the Maritime and Coastguard Agency will formally negotiate with the trade unions and will hold staff briefings and public meetings.

Search and Rescue Services

Mrs Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what recent discussions he has had with the Ministry of Defence on the privatisation of search and rescue services; and if he will make a statement; [29953]

(2) whether he has made an assessment of the effects on the UK's capacity to fulfil its search and rescue obligations of privatising search and rescue operations; and if he will make a statement. [29954]

Mike Penning: I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport on 16 December, *Official Report*, column 134WS.

Thameslink Railway Line: Maidstone

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the operators of the Southeastern rail franchise on connecting Maidstone to the Thameslink network; and if he will make a statement. [32051]

Mrs Villiers: The Thameslink programme will not be completed until 2018, several years after the expiry of the existing Southeastern and First Capital Connect franchises. The pattern of train services that will run from 2018 has not yet been decided.

Department for Transport officials are working with Southeastern looking at train service provision to Maidstone and how they could introduce incremental performance improvements on the North Kent Line. This includes reviewing the possibilities created by the Thameslink infrastructure works due to be complete at London Blackfriars in 2012. Any service change would need to be affordable and provide value for money.

Travel: Maidstone

Mrs Grant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he has taken to ensure adequate transport links between Maidstone and the City of London. [32053]

Mrs Villiers: The required level of rail services between Maidstone and London are secured through the Service Level Commitment specified in the Southeastern franchise agreement. A service level commitment is the current means by which the Secretary of State specifies the level, frequency, maximum journey times and stopping patterns of the railway passenger services that the franchisee is to operate.

Southeastern, as the train operator, is responsible for the detailed planning of the timetable. I expect Southeastern to keep its timetable under review and propose amendments or changes as it deems necessary.

Twickenham Station

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 6 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 73W, when his Department plans to complete negotiations with Stagecoach South West Trains for the delivery of additional passenger capacity at Twickenham station. [32090]

Mrs Villiers: The Department for Transport expects to complete commercial negotiations with Stagecoach South West Trains during 2011 for the delivery of additional passenger capacity and longer trains on the route to London Waterloo by 2014.

Waterloo Station

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to determine the future of the Waterloo International terminal; and what the reason is for the time taken to make that determination. [29188]

Mrs Villiers: The Secretary of State recently announced, as part of the rail settlement, that additional vehicles will be provided to alleviate overcrowding on the network.

The Department for Transport will now be engaging with various stakeholders to agree the best solution in terms of operational effectiveness and value for money for taxpayers.

The outcome of this work will help determine the long term plans for the Waterloo International terminal.

The Government wants to see the former Eurostar platforms at Waterloo International terminal brought back into use for domestic passenger services.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to announce a decision on the future of Waterloo International terminal. [30577]

Mrs Villiers: I refer to the hon. Member to the written answer given today to the hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington (Tom Brake) [UIN 29188].

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Affordable Housing: Construction

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many affordable homes were built between 2005-06 and 2008-09. [31531]

Andrew Stunell: Information on the number of additional new-build affordable homes in England for the period requested can be found from the following link:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/1406088.xls

The information covers the supply of homes for social rent, intermediate rent and low cost home ownership.

Not all affordable housing is provided through new-build completions as supply can also come from the acquisition and refurbishment of private sector homes. In 2009-10, for example, 57,730 additional affordable homes were provided in England through new-building, acquisition and refurbishment.

These are gross figures. I would draw the hon. Member's attention to the answer given to Lord Beecham of 10 November 2010, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column WA84, on the net decrease in affordable housing of 200,000 between 1997-98 and 2009-10.

Big Society

Simon Kirby: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will publish examples of best practice for Big Society initiatives; and if he will make a statement. [30323]

Andrew Stunell: We intend to publish case studies focusing on the work of the Big Society vanguards in due course. In addition, the Big Society awards, launched by the Prime Minister on 22 November, will recognise outstanding examples of the Big Society in action.

The plans set out in the Localism Bill will help build the Big Society by radically transforming the relationships between central government, local government, communities and individuals. Local people are best placed to judge which Big Society initiatives work in their area—and to promote them locally. Central Government has an important role to play in galvanising and supporting people to become involved in building the Big Society.

The Secretary of State has issued the second invitation to local authorities under the Sustainable Communities Act on Wednesday 15 December. He invited councils to consult their communities and try to reach agreement with them about how they would like to improve their area.

Building Regulations

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps he is taking to ensure that the planned local standards framework for building codes will not result in a decline in building standards. [31621]

Andrew Stunell: The Minister for Housing and Local Government, my right hon. Friend the Member for Welwyn Hatfield (Grant Shapps), recently proposed the concept of a Local Standards Framework as a means to reduce complexity, duplication and overlap in local standard-setting. My Department is now scoping out this idea with partners in house building, local government and more widely, with the aim of determining by the spring whether this would be a helpful approach to pursue.

The aim is both to reduce regulatory costs on house builders and to support local authorities and neighbourhoods to make informed decisions about additional technically robust local standards they may want to set in their local plans, taking account of the impact on viability of new development in their areas.

The framework would be additional to the Building Regulations, which will remain in place and ensure minimum build standards. These were last updated on 1 October this year and my ministerial statement of 16 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 115WS, set out the programme of work the Department will lead in the new year to establish proposals for consultation in late 2011.

Climate Change: Finance

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects to announce his plans for the future of the Climate Change Grant. [30767]

Greg Clark: The provisional Local Government Settlement for 2011-12 and 2012-13 contains provision for local planning authorities to cover planning functions, including climate change-related planning activity.

Community Development: Referendums

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if the franchise for referendums on neighbourhood plans will provide for a ballot paper for every *(a)* voter and *(b)* household. [31130]

Greg Clark: Every person with a qualifying address in the referendum area and who is entitled to vote in local council elections will be entitled to vote on neighbourhood planning proposals. We do not intend to make provision for household ballot papers.

Community Relations: Finance

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects to announce his plans for the future of the Cohesion Grant. [30768]

Andrew Stunell: Cohesion funding will end in March 2011. My Department is currently developing a new approach to promote integration and participation. This will take account of the Prevent Review and will build on this Department's previous work on cohesion.

Work is underway to consider funding decisions following the comprehensive spending review settlement and announcements of any funding will be made in due course.

Departmental Domestic Visits

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many official visits he has made to *(a)* the North East, *(b)* the North West, *(c)* the East Midlands, *(d)* the West Midlands, *(e)* Yorkshire and the Humber, *(f)* the East of England, *(g)* the South East, *(h)* Greater London and (i) the South West since his appointment. [30694]

Robert Neill: Since his appointment in May 2010, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, my right hon. Friend the Member for Brentwood and Ongar (Mr Pickles), has made officials visits to: Boscombe, Bradford, Liverpool, Southampton and Windsor and Maidenhead. He will be undertaking a series of further visits from the new year as he is keen to visit a wide range of places across the country.

Departmental Official Cars

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many journeys were undertaken by Ministerial drivers engaged by his Department since 6 May 2010; and in respect of how many such journeys a Minister *(a)* travelled in the car for (i) the whole and (ii) part of the journey and *(b)* did not travel in the car. [30773]

Robert Neill: The specific details of individual journeys by car are not recorded.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much his Department spent on overtime for staff working in the private office of the Secretary of State in each of the last five years. [28571]

Robert Neill: Total overtime payments to staff in the Secretary of State's office for the years in question are as follows

	£000
2006-07	39.8
2007-08	47.9
2008-09	60.9
2009-10	69.3
2010-11	[1]21.6

[1] Part year to 30 November 2010

Departmental Pay

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many civil servants in his Department receive annual salaries of over *(a)* £40,000, *(b)* £50,000, *(c)* £60,000, *(d)* £70,000, *(e)* £80,000, *(f)* £90,000, *(g)* £100,000, *(h)* £134,565, *(i)* £142,500 and *(j)* £200,000. [31675]

Robert Neill: The following table shows how many civil servants in the Department for Communities and Local Government receive higher salaries than the given amounts:

Salary	*Total headcount*
Over	
£200,000	0
£142,500	5
£134,565	6
£100,000	17
£90,000	24
£80,000	37
£70,000	89
£60,000	188
£50,000	535
£40,000	910

Please note that the numbers of civil servants in the second column are cumulative and so are included in the totals within the row below.

The new Government are committed to transparency and have published detailed information on staff salaries and posts on the departmental website.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent estimate he has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on his Department's annual expenditure. [31188]

Robert Neill: We have not made an estimate at departmental level. When making plans and forecasting expenditure, individual budget managers apply the rate of VAT that they expect to be chargeable at the time of the expenditure.

Departmental Stationery

Brandon Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with reference to the answer to the hon. Member for Hammersmith and Fulham of 4 September 2006, *Official Report*, column 1646W, on ballpoint pens, how much the *(a)* Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and *(b)* Deputy Prime Minister's Office spent on branded (i) ballpoint pens and (ii) fountain pens; and how many items of each make were purchased. [29367]

Robert Neill: The then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister spent a total of £3,450 on 20,000 ballpoint pens with Office of the Deputy Prime Minister branding. The new administration is encouraging staff to use up these pens to help reduce the need to buy stationery.

I also refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my right hon. Friend the Member for Brentwood and Ongar (Mr Pickles) on 25 October 2006, *Official Report*, column 1935W, and the answer given to my right hon. Friend the Member for Meriden (Mrs Spelman), on 25 October 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1934-35W.

Details of the expenditure on pens by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office are not held.

Fire Services: Finance

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much funding he plans to allocate to each fire service in each year of the spending review period. [30635]

Robert Neill: The provisional Local Government Finance settlements for 2011-12 and 2012-13 were announced by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, my right hon. Friend the Member for Brentwood and Ongar (Mr Pickles), on 13 December 2010. Details, including those for fire and rescue authorities, are available at:

http://www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/1112/grant.htm

Housing Revenue Accounts

Mr Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 260W, on local government finance, what the monetary value was of non-school reserves in the Housing Revenue Account in respect of each local authority in each year. [32064]

Robert Neill: Information on Housing Revenue Account balances appropriated to reserves is not collected centrally.

Immigrants: Newham

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps he is taking to increase the frequency of enumeration of new migrants resident in the London borough of Newham. [31589]

Mr Hurd: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics (ONS) I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what steps are being taken to maximise the enumeration rate of new migrants resident in the London borough of Newham. 31589

The 2011 Census is building on the valuable experience gained and lessons learned from the 2001 Census by placing greater emphasis on collaboration with local authorities and with many community organisations. ONS is working in partnership with local authorities in a number of ways to maximise the response to the 2011 Census. These include the development of address lists, identifying hard to count populations through local and community intelligence, and promoting the value of the census and the need for completion to all local residents. We have provided the opportunity for local authorities to comment on address lists of communal establishments in their area and Newham Borough Council has contributed fully to this process.

We have appointed two full-time area managers covering Newham who are working closely with the census liaison manager, and the assistant census liaison manager, appointed by the Newham Borough Council. The area managers are making contact with a number of local community organisations representing Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Albanian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Kosovan, Portuguese, Indian (including Sinhalese and Tamil speakers), Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, Black African, Latin American, and Filipino communities. We also have a number of part-time community advisors working with Black African, Black Caribbean, Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi communities in the Newham area. Posters and leaflets about the census in a variety of languages are being displayed in a number of venues and plans are being made to set up a number of public events to aid those who will need help in completing their questionnaires for any reason.

ONS has put a formal framework in place through which all councils can help to determine local priorities and channels of engagement. Local partnership plans identify important local enumeration challenges and provide the opportunity for the ONS local team and local council officials to discuss and determine these local priorities. Councillors from Newham have also been engaged and are being encouraged to be champions of the census in their wards.

Area managers (and local councils if possible) are being asked to encourage those with additional language skills to apply for the field staff roles currently advertised. As part of the recruitment process candidates are asked to include on their application form any language skills they have. This information will be provided to field managers so that they are fully aware of the linguistic skills that they have within their team.

A high proportion of the 35,000 field staff has been allocated to areas where it has been hard to obtain responses; particularly inner city areas, areas of high migration and population change.

The amount of resource directed towards collecting outstanding questionnaires in London is four times greater than that employed in 2001.

I hope you will be reassured by the steps that ONS is taking to enumerate residents in Newham.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what mechanism is in place to assist communities without local enterprise partnerships; [31630]

(2) which communities in England will not be covered by local enterprise partnerships; [31631]

(3) what assistance his Department plans to provide to communities that are not covered by a local enterprise partnership. [31632]

Robert Neill: We received 62 proposals for local enterprise partnerships. We have so far asked 27 local enterprise partnerships to proceed towards the establishment of their board. Together, these partnerships cover about 67% of England's population and over 60% of all businesses in England. A map identifying those areas currently and not currently covered by local enterprise partnerships has been placed in the Library of the House.

However, we are in discussion with those partnerships that were not asked to proceed with their proposal. We continue to work with them as they further develop their proposals and we will welcome revised proposals from such places as they become ready. A number of areas are planning to submit their proposals in the new year and we will ensure that the House is kept up to date as new local enterprise partnerships are confirmed.

Local Government Finance

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the level of each grant proposed to be included in the formula grant *(a)* was in 2010-11 and *(b)* will be in 2011-12. [30633]

Robert Neill: Details of grants proposed to be included in formula grant in 2011-12 are available on our website at:

http://www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/1112/keytab1112/KT3_1112.xls

Chris Williamson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans he has for the future of each area grant not planned to be included in the formula grant. [30641]

Robert Neill: The Government have significantly simplified and streamlined grant funding, by rolling around £4.4 billion of grant rolled into formula grant by 2014-15 into the unhypothecated formula grant. We have reduced revenue grants for councils from over 90 to fewer than 10 and rolled 18 grants into formula grant. The remaining grants will not be ring-fenced in 2011-12, apart from simplified schools funding. Beyond that, decisions about the precise mechanism by which grants not included in formula grant will be paid will be announced in due course.

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what proportion of the proposed reduction to formula grant over the Spending Review period he expects to make in *(a)* 2010-11, *(b)* 2011-12, *(c)* 2012-13, *(d)* 2013-14 and *(e)* 2014-15. [30763]

Robert Neill: Our plans for tackling the deficit were laid out in the Spending Review announcement of 20 October 2010. On 13 December 2010 we announced our plans for the provisional local government finance settlements for 2011-12 and 2012-13.

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much and what proportion of revenue expenditure by each local authority in England was from *(a)* revenue support grant, *(b)* area based grant, *(c)* council tax and *(d)* fees and charges in 2009-10. [31806]

Robert Neill *[holding answer 20 December 2010]*: I have today placed in the Library of the House a table that gives, by each local authority in England, the percentage of total service expenditure financed from *(a)* revenue support grant, *(b)* area based grant, *(c)* council tax and *(d)* fees and charges in 2009-10.

Mr Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much was provided in grant to local authorities, excluding that financed by business rates, in (a) cash and (b) real terms in each year since 1980-81; and what the equivalent figures are for 2011-12. [32057]

Robert Neill: Total central Government revenue grants to local authorities excluding business rates are shown in the following table for the years 1981-82 to 2009-10. These data are as reported by local authorities to the Department for Communities and Local Government on the Revenue Outturn (RO) form. Data for 1980-81 are not available.

£ million

	Central Government Grants (excluding redistributed non-domestic rates)	
Financial year	*England (cash terms)*	*England (real terms)*
1981-82	10,930	30,364

£ million

Financial year	*Central Government Grants[1] (excluding redistributed non-domestic rates)* England (cash terms)	England (real terms)[2]
1982-83	11,233	29,208
1983-84	11,520	28,639
1984-85	11,938	28,178
1985-86	11,715	26,182
1986-87	11,950	25,877
1987-88	12,723	26,059
1988-89	13,201	25,319
1989-90	13,481	24,137
1990-91	12,927	21,454
1991-92	18,620	29,175
1992-93	20,968	31,871
1993-94	21,685	32,082
1994-95	23,679	34,494
1995-96	23,335	33,[illegible]5
1996-97	23,003	31,403
1997-98	23,840	31,716
1998-99	25,291	32,952
1999-2000	26,421	33,760
2000-01	27,809	35,073
2001-02	31,469	38,820
2002-03	32,634	39,001
2003-04	41,777	48,558
2004-05	45,258	51,181
2005-06	45,838	50,914
2006-07	49,093	52,758
2007-08	51,656	53,966
2008-09	53,007	53,891
2009-10	57,883	57,883
2010-11[3]	57,916	56,175

[1] Central Government grants include specific grants inside aggregate external finance, area based grant, revenue support grant, police grant and general GLA grant.

[2] Real terms are based on 2009-10 market prices using HM Treasury GDP deflator published on 29 September 2010.

[3] Based on budget estimates of revenue expenditure from local authorities in England. HM Treasury's forecasted GDP deflator for the financial year 2010-11 is used (based on 2009-10 market prices) to produce the 'real terms' England figure, therefore could be subject to revisions.

Source:

Department for Communities and Local Government, Revenue Outturn (RO) returns

Proposals for the provisional Local Government Finance settlement for 2011-12, including Revenue Support Grant are available at:

http://www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/1112/grant.htm

Local Government Finance: Rotherham

Mr MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the difference in cash terms is between central Government grants allocated to the Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham for 2010-11 and 2011-12. [32096]

Robert Neill *[holding answer 20 December 2010]:* Rotherham's central Government grant allocation for 2010-11 is £163.4 million. This figure includes formula grant (adjusted to allow a like-for-like comparison with 2011-12) of £139.4 million and specific grants of £24 million.

The council's estimated central Government grant allocation for 2011-12 is £146.9 million. This figure includes formula grant of £123.2 million and specific grants (including council tax freeze grant) of £23.75 million. Rotherham's revenue spending power, as set out in the provisional local government finance settlement, will decrease by 5% in 2011-12.

For comparative purposes, central Government grant includes formula grant and specific revenue grants for which allocations are available in 2011-12.

Local Government: Referendums

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many referendums held by local authorities have approved an increase in council tax in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [31860]

Robert Neill: We are not aware of any such referendums being held by local authorities in England in the last five years. Council tax referendums have previously been held in Milton Keynes in 1999, Bristol in 2001 and Croydon in 2001 and 2002.

Non-domestic Rates

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what consultation he undertook with *(a)* Government Departments, *(b)* local authorities and *(c)* other organisations on proposed changes to local business rates. [31523]

Robert Neill: The Local Growth White Paper 'Local growth: realising every place's potential' confirmed that the Local Government Resource Review, starting in January, will consider proposals to allow local authorities to retain locally-raised business rates. The White Paper sought comments on those proposals, and the Government are considering all the responses we have received.

Non-domestic Rates: Carlisle

John Stevenson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much was paid in business rates in Carlisle city council area in *(a)* 2008-09 and *(b)* 2009-10. [32149]

Robert Neill: Carlisle city council collected £33,976,897 in non-domestic rates in 2008-09 and £34,488,599 in 2009-10. These amounts are irrespective to the year to which the non-domestic rates relates i.e. it includes non-domestic rates in respect of the current year, previous years and pre-payments for future years.

These figures are taken from national non-domestic rates (NNDR3) returns completed annually by all billing authorities in England.

Non-domestic Rates: Retail Trade

David Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many retail units with a rateable value of less than *(a)* £5,000, *(b)* £10,000 and *(c)* £15,000 are unoccupied. [31516]

Robert Neill: This information is not held centrally.

Planning

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what measures are in place to guide communities in the development of neighbourhood plans. [31633]

Greg Clark: Local planning authorities will have a duty to provide advice and support to those bodies preparing neighbourhood planning proposals. In addition, we expect to fund a number of organisations to provide support directly to communities in developing neighbourhood plans.

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what measures are in place to ensure fairness and equality when determining what groups of people constitute a neighbourhood; [31634]

(2) what definition of neighbourhoods his Department uses in the development of neighbourhood plans. [31635]

Greg Clark: In areas with established parish councils, the neighbourhood area for the purposes of neighbourhood planning will normally be based on existing parish boundaries, unless there are good reasons for departing from them. In areas without parishes, community groups can put themselves forward to be designated by the local planning authority as the neighbourhood forum for an area. The community group will propose what the neighbourhood area's boundaries should be, but it will be the local planning authorities who will designate neighbourhood areas ensuring coherence and fairness across their areas and that neighbourhood boundaries make sense in planning terms.

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he plans to announce the funding available under the Neighbourhood Planning Vanguards scheme. [32226]

Greg Clark: The Neighbourhood Planning Vanguards scheme was announced by means of a notice on the DCLG website on Thursday 9 December. That notice states that, under this scheme, a grant of up to £20,000 will be made available towards the cost of the plan and orders within each neighbourhood. The notice is available at:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/neighbourhoodplanningvanguards/

Planning Aid: Finance

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much funding his Department has been allocated to Planning Aid in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [31858]

Greg Clark: The Department for Communities and Local Government has allocated the following funding to Planning Aid over the last five financial years, including the current year:

Financial year	*£ million*
2006-07	1.5
2007-08	1.7
2008-09	3.2
2009-10	4.1
2010-11	3.6

Population: Statistics

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what methodology his Department uses to ensure that population figures are accurately predicted in areas with a high level of mobility. [31584]

Mr Hurd: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated December 2010:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to you Parliamentary Questions asking what methodology is used to ensure that population figures are accurately predicted in areas with a high level of mobility (31584).

ONS produces subnational population projections using an internationally recognised demographic method. This method provides projections of the estimated population of a local authority district based on assumptions that recent patterns of births, deaths, and migration continue.

These projections are not forecasts. They do not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour.

The extent to which the subnational population projections accurately reflect the future population of an area thus depends on:

the accuracy of the population estimate used as the base for the projection; and

the extent to which recent demographic patterns are repeated in the future.

Descriptions of the methodologies used in producing the population estimates and the subnational population projections are published at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/default.asp

The Quality Reports, which assess the population estimates; the sub national population projections; and the international and within UK migration estimates which feed into these, are published on the ONS website at:

www.ons.gov.uk/about-statistics/methodology-and-quality/quality/qual-info-economic-social-and-bus-stats/quality-reports-for-social-statistics/index.html

The Quality Report for the subnational projections notes that the (2008-based) projected figure for 2009 was within 1% of the population estimate for 327 of the 354 local authorities then current in England.

Methods used by the ONS to quality assure the population estimates and projections include:

scrutiny of input data to remove abnormal values where appropriate;

checks against other data sources and previous demographic patterns;

consultation with local authorities over migration assumptions used in the projections;

The subnational population projections are also constrained to the national population projections. The assumptions on which the latter are based are agreed in liaison with the devolved administrations following consultations with key users of projections in each UK country and advice from an expert academic advisory panel.

Since migration is the most difficult aspect of population change to measure accurately, it is likely that areas with a highly mobile population have a less accurate population projection than areas with a less mobile population. A detailed discussion of what is known about the reliability of population estimates is provided in section 4 of the Quality Measures for Population Estimates paper published at:

www.ons.gov.uk/about-statistics/methodology-and-quality/imps/mig-stats-improve-prog/comm-stakeholders/improvements-2008-pop-est/key-documents/quality-measures-for-population-estimates.pdf

Preventing Violent Extremism Community Leadership Fund

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects to announce his plans for the Preventing Violent Extremism Grant. [30771]

Andrew Stunell: The Home Secretary announced to the House on 9 November 2010 a review of the Government's strategy for preventing violent extremism. That made clear that the new Prevent strategy, which will be led by Home Office, will be more clearly distinguished from work to tackle wider forms of extremism and to promote integration. Work on these last two areas is currently being developed by officials in my Department, working closely with other Government Departments. Announcements about Prevent funding will be made by the Home Office following the publication of the revised Prevent strategy.

Renewable Energy: Planning Permission

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment he has made of the merits of introducing temporary fixed-term planning consents for renewable energy installations on historic listed buildings. [32207]

Robert Neill: The Government are keen to encourage take-up of renewable energy technologies, wherever possible, but we also need to protect historic buildings. Current legislation does not specifically preclude the grant of temporary listed building consents. It is for the local planning authority to decide whether such a condition would be appropriate.

Safer Stronger Communities Fund

Caroline Flint: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when he expects to announce his plans for the future of the Stronger Safer Communities Fund. [30766]

Andrew Stunell: The Stronger Safer Communities Fund was paid to local authorities until March 2008 when it became part of the non ring-fenced Area Based Grant. There will be no further DCLG funding for this over the spending review period, with the exception of £3.9 million which has been allocated to complete existing funding commitments in 2011-12.

I note the previous administration declined to commit any funding for this scheme beyond 2010-11 in a parliamentary answer of 23 February 2010, *Official Report*, column 474W.

Social Rented Housing

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if he will place in the Library a copy of the criteria used by local housing authorities to determine priority applicants; and if he will make a statement. [31861]

Andrew Stunell: Local authorities in England are responsible for drafting and making available their own scheme for determining the priorities to be followed in allocating social housing. However, under s.167 of the Housing Act 1996 an allocation scheme must be framed to ensure that 'reasonable preference' (i.e. overall priority) for social housing is given to the following categories of people:

people who are homeless or owed certain duties under the homelessness legislation

people living in insanitary, overcrowded or unsatisfactory housing

people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including ground relating to a disability

people who need to a particular locality in the district to avoid hardship to themselves or others

Social Services: Warrington

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what proportion of revenue spending power allocated to Warrington borough council for 2011-12 he plans to allocate to NHS support for social care. [31722]

Robert Neill: The Government are providing £1 billion of additional funding by 2014-15, through the Health budget to break down the barriers between health and social care. Warrington primary care trust will transfer £2.242 million to Warrington borough council in 2011-12 to support social care and benefit health. The Government have set out how the NHS should use this funding to support social care in the 2011-12 Operating Framework, published on 15 December.

Third Sector: Finance

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment he has made of the likely effect on the community and voluntary sector of reductions in the levels of Government funding. [31620]

Andrew Stunell: Spending decisions are, and will continue to be, a matter for local authorities. We have a rich diversity of voluntary organisations, charities, faith groups, cooperatives, social enterprises and local housing trusts—all of which already make a huge contribution to local life. The Big Society means using their potential and involving them even more in delivering what people want. We do not expect local authorities to respond by passing on disproportionate cuts to other service providers, especially the voluntary sector.

The Government are directing at least £470 million over the spending review period to support capacity building in the voluntary sector, including a £100 million Transition Fund as short-term support for voluntary sector organisations providing public services.

Voluntary Organisations

Gloria De Piero: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what discussions he has had with Nottinghamshire county council on *(a)* local authority funding for the voluntary sector in Ashfield constituency and *(b)* implementation of the Government's Big Society initiative. [31126]

Greg Clark: I refer the hon. Member to my speech to the SOLACE conference of 14 October 2010. A copy of the associated departmental press notice is available in the Library of the House. Ministers have had, and will have, a series of discussions with local councils on the Local Government Funding Settlement.

Improvements in commissioning processes, the community rights agenda and the development of alternative forms of finance will all help to ensure the long-term sustainability of the voluntary sector when it is most needed by individuals and local communities and in the delivery of the Big Society.

Weather

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what representations he has received on proposals for a national winter emergency plan; and if he will make a statement. [31668]

Robert Neill: I received a number of representations from Members of Parliament on behalf of their constituents but as these raised issues that were for the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, my right hon. Friend the Member for Eastleigh (Chris Huhne), they were forwarded to his Department to respond.

More broadly, I would note on 6 December DCLG published new 'Guidance on community action during severe weather: The Big Society in action'. The guidance challenges misconceptions about health and safety laws getting in the way of action and volunteering and sets out how individuals can survive the ice and snow and help their neighbours to do the same. It also emphasises the importance of providing support to older people, by calling in regularly on elderly friends, neighbours and relatives to see if they need help staying warm or with getting provisions and by letting them know about AgeUK's well-being advice and provides the charity's helpline for those who may be concerned about older people. I have placed a copy in the Library.

Welsh Language

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when his Department last published a Welsh language scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993; and at which web addresses such schemes can be accessed in *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English. [31161]

Robert Neill: The Department continues to operate the Welsh language publication scheme agreed under our predecessor department, the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) in July 2001.

The Welsh language scheme is currently available in Welsh and English on the Department's intranet.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Carbon Sequestration

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 206W, on carbon sequestration, what the reason is for the additional time taken to award the contract for the first carbon capture and storage demonstration project given that there is only one applicant for the contract. [32249]

Charles Hendry: Although there is now only one bidder for the contract it remains important that we carry out full and detailed negotiations with Scottish Power in order to secure an affordable outcome and establish appropriate commercial terms for the Project to secure best value for money. Within these constraints we are aiming to accelerate the negotiations to allow us to finalise the contract as quickly as possible.

Coal Fired Power Stations: Construction

Glyn Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what conditions on carbon emissions will be included in the emissions performance standard for new coal-fired power stations. [31880]

Charles Hendry: The Government, in the coalition agreement, committed to establish an Emissions Performance Standard (EPS) that will prevent new coal-fired power stations being built unless they are equipped with sufficient carbon capture and storage (CCS).

On 16 December the Government launched a consultation on reform of the electricity market, which includes a number of proposals for the EPS. We are consulting on a mechanism to provide an effective regulatory backstop to control emissions from new coal-fired power stations, whilst supporting the demonstration of carbon capture and storage (CCS). The EPS will sit alongside a system of rewards and incentives for low carbon generation, the building blocks of which are considered in the Electricity Market Reform consultation and the related consultation on carbon price support. Links to these can be found on the DECC website at:

www.decc.gov.uk/consultations

Glyn Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what his policy is on the building of coal-fired power stations. [31881]

Charles Hendry: Government policy is to prevent the construction and operation of new unabated coal-fired power stations, while supporting the demonstration of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology, which is critical in allowing fossil fuel power stations to operate in a carbon constrained world. The Government will not consent coal-fired powers stations that do not have CCS equipped to a proportion of their capacity, and is currently consulting on planning requirements for England and Wales to achieve this as part of the revised draft National Policy Statements. Planning in Scotland is a devolved matter for Scottish Ministers.

In addition, on 16 December the Government launched a consultation on reform of the electricity market in Great Britain. This contains detailed proposals on the establishment of an Emissions Performance Standard (EPS), which will act as a regulatory backstop to prevent the construction and operation of unabated coal-fired power stations, and sit alongside a system of rewards and incentives for low-carbon generation.

Departmental Procurement

Catherine McKinnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible have taken to comply with the Guidance of the Office of Government Commerce on promoting skills through public procurement issued in 2009. [31322]

Gregory Barker: The Department and its non-departmental bodies have taken the following steps to fully comply with the Guidance of the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) on promoting skills through public procurement.

All tenders issued follow OGC best practice guidance. The Department and its arms length bodies use pre-qualification documents and invitations to tender based on OGC documents. Procurement staff seek opportunities to promote skills training and apprenticeships in contracts wherever appropriate. Staff are provided with relevant training and development and have the opportunity to achieve full accreditation as a Member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (MCIPS).

Energy: Housing

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what forecast of the likely average level of household energy use his Department used in its calculation of the potential for household energy saving resulting from retrofitted energy efficiency measures paid for by loans through the Green Deal. [31622]

Gregory Barker: The current assumptions being used by DECC to calculate the potential for energy savings are published in the Green Deal Development Stage Impact Assessment alongside the Energy Bill.

The variation in household energy use by property type (e.g. solid wall or cavity wall) means that different levels of energy use are used in the calculation of potential energy savings from the retrofitting of different types of energy efficiency measures.

A typical household in 2020 is assumed to be a reasonably well-insulated three-bed semi-detached household (with cavity wall insulation, and some loft insulation), which heats its living areas to 22°C. This assumes that households will progressively take more comfort and increase their heating requirements over time, in line with recent trends. Assuming the house is heated using an 85% efficient boiler in 2020 (78% in 2010) then the level of gas needed for heating and hot water would be 23,100kWh a year or 16,000kWh for heating only.

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what forecast of the likely average level of household energy use his Department used in its calculation of the potential for energy savings for households in the social housing sector resulting from retrofitted energy efficiency measures paid for by loans through the Green Deal. [31623]

Gregory Barker: The current assumptions being used by DECC to calculate the potential for energy savings are published in the Green Deal Development Stage Impact Assessment alongside the Energy Bill.

The variation in household energy use by property type (e.g. solid wall or cavity wall) means that different levels of energy use are used in the calculation of potential energy savings from the retrofitting of different types of energy efficiency measures. The impact assessment did not make separate calculations for households in the social housing sector.

An average household in 2020 is projected to be a reasonably well-insulated three-bed semi-detached household (with cavity wall insulation, and some loft insulation), which heats its living areas to 22°C. This assumes that households will progressively take more comfort and increase their heating requirements over time, in line with recent trends. Assuming the house is heated using an 85% efficient boiler in 2020 (78% in 2010) then the level of gas needed for heating and hot water would be 23,100 kWh a year or 16,000 kWh for heating only.

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate his Department made of the likely annual energy cost savings per household in the social housing sector resulting from retrofitted energy efficiency measures paid for by loans through the Green Deal. [31624]

Gregory Barker: Details of the illustrative estimates of annual energy cost savings per household as a result of different energy efficiency measures can be found in the annexes of the Green Deal Development Stage Impact Assessment, published alongside the Energy Bill. Energy cost savings are calculated by combining assumed energy use savings with projected future energy prices, which can be found on the DECC website.

The Green Deal Development Stage Impact Assessment did not make separate calculations for households in the social housing sector.

It is worth noting that the impact assessment does not separate the benefits of the possible Green Deal finance regime from those of a potential future energy company obligation. Consequently it does not anticipate how the measures will be paid for.

Jack Dromey: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate his Department made of the likely annual energy cost savings per household as a result of retrofitted energy efficiency measures paid for by loans through the Green Deal. [31625]

Gregory Barker: Details of the current illustrative estimates of annual energy cost savings per household as a result of different energy efficiency measures can be found in the annexes of the Green Deal Impact Assessment, published alongside the Energy Bill. Energy cost savings are calculated by combining the assumed energy use savings with the estimated future energy prices, which can be found on the DECC website.

It is worth noting that the impact assessment does not separate the possible benefits of the Green Deal finance regime from those of the potential future energy company obligation. Consequently it does not anticipate how the measures will be paid for.

Energy: Meters

Mr Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change when he expects the smart metering go-live phase prior to the establishment of the central data and communications entity to begin. [29274]

Charles Hendry: The Government and Ofgem published a Smart Metering Prospectus for consultation in July.

This set out proposals for how smart metering will be delivered. We are reviewing the extensive responses to the consultation and undertaking further stakeholder engagement and analysis. This work includes the development of the timetable for the rollout of smart meters, including the phase prior to the establishment of the central data and communications function. A response to the consultation will be published in the new year.

Mr Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change when he expects the key priority areas for pilot smart meter trials to be identified; and by what means the *(a)* format, *(b)* scope and *(c)* success criteria of pilot schemes will be decided. [29275]

Charles Hendry: A range of practical trials which will provide information relevant to the roll-out of smart meters in Great Britain are already underway, as part of the Energy Demand Research Project and the Low Carbon Networks Fund, both of which are managed by Ofgem. Energy suppliers will carry out further trialling of smart metering systems for which specifications are currently being developed, in the run-up to large-scale roll-out.

Mr Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change when he expects *(a)* the Smart Meter Design Group and *(b)* the Data and Communication Group to (i) complete their work and (ii) publish any findings on smart metering. [29276]

Charles Hendry: The Government and Ofgem published a "Smart Metering Prospectus" for consultation in July.

This set out proposals for how smart metering will be delivered. We are reviewing the extensive responses to the consultation and undertaking further stakeholder engagement and analysis. The work of the Smart Meter Design Group and the Data and Communication Group is informing this process and the outputs of their work are being published on Ofgem's website. A response to the consultation will be published in the new year.

Mr Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change when his Department plans to publish final proposals arising from the consultation on the proposals contained in the Smart Metering Implementation Programme Prospectus. [29277]

Charles Hendry: The Government and Ofgem, published a "Smart Metering Prospectus" for consultation in July. This set out proposals for how smart metering will be delivered, including design requirements, central communications, data management and the approach to rollout. We are reviewing the extensive responses to the consultation, and undertaking further stakeholder engagement and analysis. A response to the consultation will be published in the new year.

Energy: Prices

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what steps he plans to take to increase the transparency of energy tariffs for households; and if he will make a statement. [32114]

Charles Hendry: The Energy Bill, introduced into the House of Lords on 8 December, includes proposals to require energy suppliers to inform consumers through their bills about the cheapest available tariff to give customers greater control over their energy costs. Full details of the Bill are available online at:

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldbills/033/11033.52-58.html#j031

In addition, Ofgem announced a review of the retail energy market to decide if further changes are needed to ensure the market works in the interests of consumers and to increase transparency. Ofgem will report on this review in March of next year. This announcement is available online at:

http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/Media/PressRel/Documents1/Retail%20Market%2026%20November.pdf

Nicky Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* energy and *(b)* water suppliers on (i) energy prices and (ii) levels of infrastructure funding; and if he will bring forward proposals to establish a mechanism to ensure increases in suppliers' operating profit are passed on to the consumer. [32349]

Charles Hendry: DECC Ministers and officials meet with suppliers on a regular basis to discuss market issues. Meetings with the water suppliers are a matter for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

We have no current plans to bring forward such proposals. However, we agree it is important that consumers have the lowest possible energy bills, consistent with the need to invest to reduce carbon emissions from energy and ensure security of supply.

Ofgem, therefore, monitors the market closely and reports quarterly on retail prices. Their latest report shows significant increases in estimated supplier margins for the year ahead, largely due to recent price increases. We are disappointed on behalf of consumers by this development and welcome the announcement of Ofgem's review of the retail market. Ofgem will report on this review in March of next year. This announcement is available online at:

http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/Media/PressRel/Documents1/Retail%20Market%2026%20November.pdf

Environment Protection: Job Creation

Julian Sturdy: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will estimate the number of green jobs that will be created in York by 2015. [32178]

Gregory Barker: Government-commissioned research indicates that, in 2008-09, employment in the UK Low Carbon and Environmental Goods and Services sector was approximately 910,000, including those employed in the supply chain of these industries, and is projected to increase to over a million by middle of the decade. The research includes regional job estimates, including for Yorkshire and Humber. The research is available online at:

http://www.berr.gov.uk/Policies/business-sectors/low-carbon-business-opportunities/market-intelligence

Feed-in Tariffs

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what plans he has for the implementation of the provisions of the Feed-in Tariffs (Specified Maximum Capacity and Functions Order 2010); and if he will make a statement. [32119]

Charles Hendry: The Feed-in Tariffs (Specified Maximum Capacity and Functions) Order 2010 (Statutory Instrument No.678) came into force on 1 April 2010. Together with modifications to the standard conditions of electricity supply licenses, it forms the basis for the implementation of the Feed-in Tariffs (FITs) scheme.

The coalition Government are fully committed to the implementation of FITs. To ensure that the scheme continues to be delivered as envisaged we are intending to bring forward some minor procedural amendments to the Order early in the new year. Additionally, the recent spending review confirmed that the first formal review of FITs will take place in 2012, taking effect in April 2013, unless higher than expected deployment requires an early review.

Fuel Poverty: Finance

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will bring forward proposals to ensure that householders at each *(a)* income level and *(b)* credit risk level will be able to access finance under the Green Deal. [31765]

Gregory Barker: Green Deal arrangements will be financed by private companies, and we are in discussions with a range of potential providers, who have expressed interest in targeting customers from all income brackets. The credit risk of individual Green Deal customers should not be so relevant as with a standard credit arrangement as the charge will pass across to any subsequent bill-payer.

We will design the new Energy Company Obligation, which will take over from the current CERT and CESP when they come to an end, in a way that complements Green Deal finance arrangements, ensuring that further support is available for those in need of additional help, including low income vulnerable households.

Fuel Poverty: Meters

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change for what reasons his Department's impact assessment for the roll-out of smart meters, dated July 2010, did not contain information on the effects of the roll-out on the vulnerable and the fuel-poor comparable to that in the impact assessment dated April 2007, entitled Appraisal of Costs and Benefits of Smart Metering: Roll Out Options, Final Report; and what consideration he has given to providing *(a)* a dedicated help line, *(b)* marketing campaigns, *(c)* consumer protection in relation to display and meter functionality and *(d)* changes to existing energy company licence conditions in order to provide protection from (i) aggressive sales and marketing and (ii) doorstep mis-selling for the vulnerable and fuel-poor. [31350]

Charles Hendry: The Appraisal of Costs and Benefits dated "April 2007" (and published in May 2008) was a report undertaken by Mott Macdonald for the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR). Impact Assessments produced from 2008 by BERR and more recently by DECC have assessed the costs and benefits of the roll-out to all customers. The impact of the roll-out on the vulnerable is specifically considered in the Equality Section of the Impact Assessment and remains a core aspect of the work of the Smart Meters Implementation Programme.

A positive consumer experience is key to delivering the benefits of smart metering. In the Prospectus published in July 2010 we sought views on the approach to consumer engagement and protection, including the functional requirements for meters and in-home displays, and the installation visits. We are reviewing the extensive responses to the consultation and undertaking further stakeholder engagement and analysis. In doing so we are taking account of the significant contribution made by Consumer Focus in this area. A response to the consultation will be published in the new year.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Stephen Gilbert: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate his Department has made of the level of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions attributable to thermal energy-from-waste facilities including incinerators. [32073]

Gregory Barker: Estimates from the UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory indicate that emissions attributable to thermal energy-from-waste facilities are as shown in the following table. These figures relate to 2008, the most recent year for which final data are available, and include emissions from both fossil carbon and biogenic sources.

Gas	*Emissions (kilotonnes carbon dioxide equivalent)*
Carbon dioxide (CO_2)	2,476
Methane (CH_4)	55
Nitrous oxide (N_2O)	24
Total	2,555

Northern Ireland Executive

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change on what dates he has had discussions on his Department's work with Ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive in the last 12 months. [31934]

Gregory Barker: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not had discussions with Ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive relating to his Department's work since the coalition Government took office in May 2010. My hon. Friend the Minister of State for Energy and I have had discussions with their counterparts in the Northern Ireland Executive on a range of issues over that period, including at Joint Ministerial Committee, European Council and British-Irish Council meetings.

Nuclear Power Stations: Construction

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change pursuant to the answer of 2 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 933W, on nuclear power stations: construction, what steps he plans to take in response to the report on nuclear lessons learned. [32323]

Charles Hendry: The Department welcomes the publication of the "Engineering the Future: Nuclear Lessons Learned" report, and the recommendations contained in it. In response, the Department will be participating in the work being led by the Institute for Civil Engineers to undertake an ongoing knowledge capture and dissemination exercise, to ensure that the report stays up to date.

Tidal Power

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what plans he has to provide long-term revenue support for marine renewable technologies. [31353]

Charles Hendry: We are committed to the full establishment of feed-in tariff systems in electricity—as well as the maintenance of banded renewable obligation certificates. We have already brought forward the scheduled review of the renewable obligation by a year to give investors confidence As part of the electricity market reforms, we have set out plans for support for Marine, and other renewables and low carbon technologies, for the longer term.

Warm Front Scheme

Luciana Berger: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change whether his Department conducted an equality impact assessment of the potential effects on women of the reduction in funding for the Warm Front scheme. [31474]

Gregory Barker *[holding answer 20 December 2010]*: As part of the spending review, the Government will continue to fund a smaller, targeted Warm Front programme for the next two years, with £110 million available in 2011-12 and £100 million in 2012-13 for the scheme. We are currently consulting on proposed changes to the scheme's eligibility criteria so that it better targets the most vulnerable.

An equality impact assessment has been carried out on the proposed changes to the eligibility criteria. None of the proposed changes is found to discriminate against women.

Water Power: Finance

Andrew Percy: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what plans he has for the long-term funding of marine renewable technologies. [32100]

Gregory Barker: The Government's commitment to the marine renewables sector is clearly reflected in the Coalition Agreement.

The Government are currently developing its detailed plans for the allocation of the £200 million to support the development of energy technologies announced in the Spending Review—and measures to support wave and tidal technologies are being considered as part of that process.

A scheduled review of renewables obligation support for all technologies, including for marine energy, began this year, and we have already brought forward the timetable for this review by a year. Any changes will still take effect from 1 April 2013 for marine renewables, but we will now consult on bands next Summer, rather than in 2012. As part of the electricity market reform, we will be setting out plans for support for marine, and other renewables, for the longer term.

Andrew Percy: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what plans he has to encourage the commercial deployment of wave and tidal energy technologies. [32101]

Gregory Barker *[holding answer 20 December 2010]*: The Government is committed to harnessing the benefits which a successful marine renewables sector can bring to the UK. We plan to establish a UK marine energy programme in collaboration with the marine energy sector, focusing the sector's ability to develop and deploy wave and tidal energy devices at a commercial scale.

The Government are currently developing its detailed plans for the allocation of the £200 million to support the development of energy technologies announced in the Spending Review—and measures to support wave and tidal technologies are being considered as part of that process.

A scheduled review of renewables obligation support for all technologies, including for marine energy, began this year, and we have already brought forward the timetable for this review by a year. Any changes will still take effect from 1 April 2013 for marine renewables, but we will now consult on bands next summer, rather than in 2012.

As part of the electricity market reform, we will be setting out plans for support for low carbon technologies, such as marine, in the longer term.

Weather

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what representations he has received on proposals for a national winter emergency plan; and if he will make a statement. [31669]

Gregory Barker: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer given to the hon. Member for Bolton West (Julie Hilling) by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, my hon. Friend the Member for Guildford (Anne Milton) on 22 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 168W.

Wind Power: Subsidies

Mr MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the cost to the Exchequer of subsidies given to wind farms in 2010-11. [32047]

Charles Hendry: The latest data available (as of 16 December 2010) on the Ofgem ROC Register show that 2,884,118 ROCs were issued to onshore wind farms between April 2010 and September 2010 and 1,837,475 ROCs to offshore wind farms over the same period, these are available at:

https://www.renewablesandchp.ofgem.gov.uk/Public/ReportManager.aspx?ReportVisibility=1&ReportCategory=0

The expected value of a ROC under headroom is the buy-out price (£36.99 in 2010-11) plus 10%. On this basis, the estimated value from the RO is around £117 million between April 2010 and September 2010 for onshore wind, and around £75 million for offshore wind.

Wind installations of less than 5 MW are also eligible for feed-in tariffs. Information on feed-in tariffs in the form requested is not yet available. However, live information on the number of installations registered for FITs, broken down by technology and tariff band, is available from the Ofgem register. Under FITs, generators receive a tariff for every kilowatt-hour (kWh) of electricity generated which differs by technology type and scale. The generation tariffs for wind in 2010-11 are reproduced in the following table. Generators also receive an additional payment of 3p/kWh of electricity exported.

Scale	*Generation tariff for 2010-11 (p/kWh)*
Wind <1.5 kW	34.5
Wind >1.5-15 kW	26.7
Wind >15-100 kW	24.1
Wind >100-500 kW	18.8
Wind >500 kW-1.5 MW	9.4
Wind >1.5 MW-5 MW	4.5

SCOTLAND

Scotland Bill

John Stevenson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assessment he has made of the economic effects of the provisions of Part 3 of the Scotland Bill on *(a)* Cumbria and *(b)* other areas of (i) England and (ii) Scotland close to the border between Scotland and England. [30814]

David Mundell: The Scotland Bill delivers the Government's coalition commitment to implement the recommendations in the Final Report of the Commission on Scottish Devolution. An impact assessment was published at introduction of the Scotland Bill for the taxation provisions within the Bill. The impact assessment identifies that there are cross-border implications for employees and employers on either side of the English-Scottish border. A copy of the impact assessment is available in the Library of the House.

The impact assessment does not address non-taxation matters within the Bill as the Scotland Bill provides for the transfers of powers between the UK and Scottish Parliaments and Governments, but does not provide for the alteration of policy effect.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Forestry Commission: Land

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2010, *Official Report*, column 146W, on Forestry Commission: land, what the name is of each commercial company with which *(a)* she and *(b)* Ministers in her Department have had discussions on the Government's proposals to consult on the future of the public forest estate in England. [31284]

Mr Paice: I have not held any formal ministerial consultations with commercial forestry interests, although I have met a range of representatives from the forestry sector, including non-government organisations and commercial companies, in the course of large scale events such as the APF International Forestry Expo in September. At that event I and the Confederation of Forest Industries (UK) Ltd (an industry representative body) discussed and listened to views on forestry management and the public forest estate from a wide variety of industry bodies.

The Secretary of State has not had discussions with any commercial companies about the future of the public forest estate.

Agriculture

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance her Department has issued to the pig and poultry industry on exposure of the animal population to the *(a)* H5N1 and *(b)* H1N1 virus. [31022]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 16 December 2010]*: DEFRA monitors the occurrence of major animal disease outbreaks world wide as an early warning to assess the risk these events may pose to the UK. It carries out qualitative risk assessments and preliminary outbreak assessments to estimate the likelihood of the disease entering the UK and these are published on the DEFRA website.

Most recently, on 6 December 2010, DEFRA published a preliminary outbreak assessment relating to an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1 in poultry in Japan. This concluded that while there was no additional risk from this particular outbreak, there is a continual low risk of introduction of avian notifiable disease into the UK and EU poultry population through contact with wild birds where the viruses are circulating. The guidance to the poultry industry remains that it is important to maintain biosecurity on poultry premises and reduce the level of contact with wild birds as far as possible, as well as reporting suspicion of disease promptly to the veterinary authorities.

In August 2009 industry and Government published a Code of Practice for pig keepers relating to influenza in pigs. The code provides clear guidance to pig keepers on the actions they should take to reduce the risk of introduction of influenza viruses, including pandemic H1N1, to pig herds and to prevent disease leaving the premises should this occur.

Various influenza A virus strains are endemic in most pig keeping countries worldwide, including the UK, with the pandemic strain of H1N1 first detected in pigs in England in late 2009. Since 1991, the Veterinary Laboratories Agency has operated a surveillance scheme to monitor the strains present in the GB herd, publishing results regularly.

Animal Products: EU Law

Mr Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has received on simplification of the implementation of the European Animal By-Products Regulation. [31096]

Mr Paice: DEFRA recently completed a consultation exercise on new domestic Regulations to implement and enforce the new Regulation (EC) 1069/2009 laying down health rules regarding animal by-products which comes into force in March 2011. A number of representations were received and a Government response will be made available shortly.

Animal Products: Waste Disposal

Mr Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what definition of a covered area is used in *(a)* the European Animal By-Products Regulation and *(b)* the implementing legislation for the UK. [31097]

Mr Paice: Regulation (EC) 1774/2002 laying down health rules regarding animal by-products does not specifically define 'covered area' but does make it a requirement for certain plants to have a 'covered area' for receiving animal by-products. This regulation will be replaced in March 2011 by Regulation 1069/2009(EC) which will not substantively change the requirements in this regard. As an EU regulation, the legislation is directly applicable in all member states so UK legislation only provides powers to enforce that legislation.

Animal Health is responsible for the approval and inspection of such plants under this legislation and is able to provide further guidance where needed.

Animal Welfare

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent scientific advice she has received on the exposure of the animal population in the United Kingdom to the *(a)* H5N1 and *(b)* H1N1 virus. [31023]

Mr Paice [holding answer 16 December 2010]: The UK carries out annual surveys for avian influenza (AI) in poultry and wild birds. The purpose of the poultry survey is to detect AI of subtypes H5 and H7 in different species of poultry. The purpose of the wild bird survey is to detect highly pathogenic H5N1 viruses through sampling of wild birds found dead and investigation of the cause of death of large numbers of birds ("mass mortality events"). In addition, since H5N1 is a notifiable form of AI, specific investigations are also carried out by Animal Health following reports of illness in birds where suspect disease cannot be initially ruled out. No active infection with H5N1 has been detected in poultry or wild birds so far this year, either from surveillance or routine reports of suspect disease. DEFRA also elicits scientific advice from a panel of expert ornithologists (British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, and Scottish Natural Heritage among others) about wild bird movements and has done so recently in relation to recent adverse weather conditions.

The Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) has continued to run the DEFRA-funded surveillance for influenza viruses in pigs since 1991. The report from August 2010 indicates that pandemic H1N1 continues to circulate at a low level in pigs in the UK this year (following first detection in pigs in late 2009). There are no reported UK infections with this virus in other domestic livestock populations.

Reports on surveillance are published on the VLA website.

Animal Welfare: Circuses

Mr Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will assess the effects on animal welfare of live animal performances in circuses; and what her policy is on live animal performances in circuses. [30556]

Mr Paice: DEFRA officials and veterinarians have considered a variety of relevant scientific research publications which, in turn, were evaluated by a panel of academics and veterinarians to inform a report commissioned by DEFRA in 2006 on the welfare of wild animals in travelling circuses. Additionally, last year veterinarians looked at the scientific review "Are wild animals suited to a travelling circus life?" by the University of Bristol (Iossa et al, Animal Welfare 2009, 18: 129-140).

We are currently considering the 13,000 or so responses to our consultation on the use of wild animals in circuses before we publish a summary. In the meantime, Lord Henley has been meeting with representatives of welfare groups and the circus industry. An industry body has proposed a self-regulatory system, but no decisions have been made.

Badgers

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of the licensing and monitoring systems that would be required for a cull of badgers undertaken by her Department. [31341]

Mr Paice: As stated in the consultation impact assessment, costs to be incurred by Government for licensing are estimated at £26,000 for a 150km^2 application area.

This is based on receiving a modest number of applications and includes assessing applications and monitoring compliance. It does not include costs for setting up the licensing system which are yet to be determined. Costs to be incurred by Government for monitoring are estimated at £200 per km^2 of participating land. This includes monitoring badger population numbers, humaneness of the methods used, epidemiological monitoring of the disease and monitoring protected sites. These costs will be refined in the final impact assessment.

Birds of Prey: Crime

Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps have been taken to implement the recommendations of the Raptor Working Group Report on *(a)* enforcement of measures and *(b)* recording of crimes against birds of prey. [31646]

Richard Benyon: Action to tackle crimes against birds of prey has continued since the publication of the UK Raptor Working Group report in 2000, which, among other things, recommended enhanced enforcement of existing legislation. For the last four years the persecution of birds of prey has been a wildlife crime priority for the UK. This priority has been addressed through action plans which include prevention, intelligence and enforcement measures aimed at delivering a targeted, focused tactical response.

The National Wildlife Crime Unit (part funded by Government) gathers, records and monitors information and intelligence about illegal activities affecting birds of prey. It uses this information to support the wildlife crime priority action plans, as well as to assist individual enforcers in their investigations. It also works closely with all the UK administrations as species conservation is a devolved matter.

Camels: Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what treatments her Department permits to be carried out on camelids suspected of carrying tuberculosis; and if she will make a statement. [31310]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 16 December 2010]:* DEFRA does not recommend any treatment for animals suspected of carrying tuberculosis (TB). In fact, anti-TB treatment is specifically prohibited in cattle and deer. There are several sound scientific and public health reasons why treatment should not take place in any TB-susceptible animals, including the fact that treatment can mask the reactions to the TB tests in infected animals, thus causing false negative results and also valid concerns around the possible development of antibiotic drug-resistant strains of the bacterium. Because of this, if an animal has been treated for TB, DEFRA and its agencies will need to amend or suspend normal testing procedures to ensure that any infection does not go undetected.

There are no veterinary drugs licensed in the UK for the treatment of TB in cattle or other mammals. However, under the veterinary medicines cascade system private veterinary surgeons are not prevented from prescribing human medicines to treat TB, though they would need to consider carefully with a camelid owner the practical, public health and veterinary implications of using an unlicensed, untested human medicine in this way.

It is for those reasons that DEFRA's advice has been (and continues to be) that any suspect clinical cases of TB in known infected camelid herds should be immediately notified to Animal Health and culled, rather than subject to treatment regimes of questionable efficacy in animals.

Carbon Emissions: Business

Gregg McClymont: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress she has made on the implementation of Section 85(1)(a) of the Climate Change Act 2008. [30380]

Mr Paice *[holding answer 13 December 2010]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Hartlepool (Mr Wright) on 27 October 2010, *Official Report*, column 319W.

Dairy Farming

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions the Food and Farming Minister has had with ministerial colleagues in the Department for Communities and Local Government on the likely effect on the character of rural areas of large-scale, intensive, indoor dairy production units. [31618]

Mr Paice: I have had no discussions with ministerial colleagues in the Department for Communities and Local Government on the likely effect of large-scale, intensive, indoor dairy production units on the character of the local countryside. The impact of any specific proposal on the local countryside would be for the appropriate planning authorities to consider.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effect of intensive indoor milk production units on (i) traditional dairy farmers, (ii) the milk processing industry, (iii) local rural economies and (iv) rural management. [31619]

Mr Paice: DEFRA has not commissioned or evaluated any specific research into these aspects of intensive indoor milk production. There is, however, ongoing research into other aspects, including animal welfare.

The impacts of intensive indoor milk production units on traditional dairy farmers, the milk processing industry, local rural economies and rural management will depend to a large extent upon the future demand profile for UK production of milk and the extent to which such facilities increase.

At the next dairy supply chain forum, which I chair, I will be challenging the industry to take the opportunity to secure its own resilient and sustainable future and the ongoing demand for UK milk production, initially by redressing the current trade deficit for dairy products in the UK consumer market.

Dairy farms must comply with all the relevant legislation, including environmental legislation, whatever the size of unit or system of production.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has considered the establishment of minimum separation distances between large-scale, intensive, indoor dairy production units and residential areas. [31725]

Mr Paice: We have not considered the establishment of minimum separation distances between large-scale, intensive, indoor dairy production units and residential areas. Such issues are within the remit of the planning authorities.

Dangerous Dogs

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she plans to bring forward proposals to repeal the provisions on breed-specific prohibitions contained in the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. [31210]

Mr Paice: Section 3 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and the 1871 Dogs Act already allow action to be taken against a dog of any type or breed if it is deemed to be behaving dangerously.

Nevertheless, a proposal to add or remove types of dogs to or from the prohibited list was included in DEFRA's consultation on dangerous dog legislation. The summary of responses to the consultation can be found at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/dangerous-doqs/index.htm

The issue of dangerous dogs is not just a problem of dangerous breeds but also one of bad owners. They need to be held to account and stopped from ruining people's lives. We are working closely with ministerial colleagues in the Home Office on the antisocial behaviour dimension to this issue. We are also working with groups such as the RSPCA to look at other issues raised in the consultation, such as breed-specific bans, micro-chipping and attacks on private property.

My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Lord Henley) is due to announce the Government's approach to dangerous dogs early in the new year.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many seizures of dogs under the terms of section 5 (1) of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales in the last 10 years. [31340]

Mr Paice: Figures for the number of dogs seized under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 are not collected centrally.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what her policy is on the extension of the provisions of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 to private dwellings; [31345]

(2) what recent representations she has received on the extension of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 to private dwellings; and if she will make a statement. [31343]

Mr Paice: A proposal to issue dog control notices on private land was included in DEFRA's consultation on dangerous dog legislation. DEFRA received 3,215 responses on this issue, of which 37% were in favour and 63% opposed. The summary of responses to the consultation can be found at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/dangerous-dogs/index.htm

The issue of dangerous dogs is not just a problem of dangerous breeds but also one of bad owners. They need to be held to account and stopped from ruining people's lives. We are working closely with ministerial colleagues in the Home Office on the antisocial behaviour dimension to this issue. We are also working with groups such as the RSPCA to look at other issues raised in the consultation, such as breed-specific bans, micro-chipping and attacks on private property.

My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Lord Henley) is due to announce the Government's approach to dangerous dogs early in the new year.

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many entries have been made on the Index of Exempted Dogs in each year since 1991; and in respect of which types of dog such entries were made. [31346]

Mr Paice: Over 8,000 dogs were initially placed on the Index when the 1991 Act came into force. From early 1992 to 1997 no dogs were allowed to be added to the Index. Since the Dangerous Dogs (Amendment) Act 1997 was passed, any court has been able to order that a specific dog be added to the Index by the issue of a court order. To date only one of the dogs placed on the Index has been a non-pitbull type and that was a Japanese Tosa.

The following table shows the numbers of dogs added to the Index of Exempted Dogs between 1997 and 2009, inclusive.

	Certificates of exemption issued
1997	9
1998	36
1999	26
2000	15
2001	4
2002	7
2003	0
2004	6
2005	1
2006	6
2007	141
2008	255
2009	314

Data for 2010 are planned for publication next year.

Departmental Overtime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department spent on overtime for staff working within her private office in each of the last five years. [28569]

Richard Benyon: It is not possible to identify how much has been spent on overtime specifically for staff working in the Secretary of State's office as this information is not held centrally. The following table shows how much was spent on overtime and the private secretary allowance for staff working in all of the Department's Minister's private offices and the permanent secretary's office in each of the last five financial years.

£

	Overtime	*Private secretary allowance*	*Total*
2005-06	214,872	29,841	244,713
2006-07	92,615	46,229	138,844
2007-08	27,710	81,572	109,282
2008-09	17,104	103,553	120,657
2009-10	15,808	64,728	80,536

Historically, on entering private office, staff had the option to either claim overtime for extra hours worked in excess of conditioned hours or to receive the Private Secretary Allowance. Staff were not allowed to receive both. In more recent years, however, DEFRA's approach has been for staff to claim the allowance rather than overtime. The allowance is an annual allowance and is currently paid at an annual level of: £6,802 for staff at Grade 7 and above; £4,107 for staff at senior executive officer, higher executive officer and fast stream; and £3,474 for staff at other grades.

Departmental Pay

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff employed by her Department were not paid at a rate equivalent to or above the London living wage in the latest period for which figures are available. [31228]

Richard Benyon: There are no staff in DEFRA, within the London pay ranges, who are paid a full-time equivalent, at or below the London living wage.

Departmental Procurement

Catherine McConnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps *(a)* her Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* the non-departmental public bodies for which she is responsible have taken to comply with the Guidance of the Office of Government Commerce on promoting skills through public procurement issued in 2009. [31318]

Richard Benyon: The Department, its agencies and non-departmental bodies closely collaborate on all matters related to procurement and this includes promoting skills in public procurement. This collaboration and active participation includes and is not limited to the following:

Participating in the OGC Graduate Programme for Procurement.

Participating in the SWITCH programme, taking non-procurement civil servants into the Procurement and Commercial Function and arranging training to CIPS level.

Defining job descriptions for all levels of the procurement function and making these levels available to staff so they know what they need to do to move to procurement or the next level.

Arranging and attending legal seminars on current legal topics in the EU procurement field.

Arranging 'soft skills' training courses on negotiation skills and presentation skills.

Participating with and providing input to the OGC Rewards Programme designed to make procurement a 'profession'.

Greater and more detailed visibility of procurement on the departmental intranet.

Introducing and controlling with business areas the skills required for improved contract management.

Encouraging CIPS training in all areas.

Providing 'Senior Awareness' sessions on procurement

Publication of a 'Pocket Guide to Procurement'.

Regular joint sessions with all bodies covering all areas of procurement collaboration.

Providing a central website for procurement information for all procurement staff in all bodies.

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* steps she is taking to encourage small businesses to bid for contracts let by her Department and *(b)* recent guidance she has provided to small businesses on bidding for such contracts. [32027]

Richard Benyon: All procurements are conducted under the government and EU guidelines and preference is not allowed to be shown to any particular possible suppliers groups. However, where requirements are known to be possibly satisfied by some supplier groups, then action is taken to make these possible suppliers aware that an opportunity is available and directs them to where information on the bid requirements can be found.

Government action on the Transparency Agenda has provided the processes for publication of tenders issued and contracts awarded. From next April 2011, all tender opportunities over £10,000 and in some cases those under this value, will be published on the Government Contracts Finder website. This replaces the current process where businesses can find opportunities on the Supply2Gov website. All supplier groups are encouraged to register on the website and can receive automatic email notifications of opportunities. The Department also uses other solutions to provide information to suppliers about opportunities.

The Department has not written directly to small businesses as this would contravene Government and EU procurement regulations. It is understood that the Cabinet Office Efficiency Reform Group have had discussions with appropriate industry bodies representing small businesses to advise them of the new processes for tender opportunities and encourage them to get their members to register so that the relevant notifications of opportunities can be provided.

Julian Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with voluntary and community groups on bidding for contracts let by her Department. [32028]

Richard Benyon: The Department in its role of ensuring that its objectives are satisfied, talks to many bodies from different sectors, including voluntary and community groups.

All procurements are conducted under the government and EU guidelines and preference is not allowed to be shown to any particular possible suppliers groups. However, where requirements are known to be possibly satisfied by some supplier groups, then action is taken to make these possible suppliers aware that an opportunity is available and directs them to where information on the bid requirements can be found.

Government action on the Transparency Agenda has provided the processes for publication of tenders issued and contracts awarded. From next April 2011, all tender opportunities over £10,000 and in some cases those under this value, will be published on the Government Contracts Finder website. This replaces the current process where businesses can find opportunities on the Supply2Gov website. All supplier groups are encouraged to register on the website and can receive automatic email notifications of opportunities.

Departmental Public Expenditure

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent estimate she has made of the effect of the increase in the standard rate of value added tax on her Department's annual expenditure. [31185]

Richard Benyon: An estimate of the effect of the increase was made when DEFRA was preparing its submission for the 2010 spending review, but the impact on the Department's budget was found to be negligible.

Departmental spending review settlements are set on a tax-inclusive basis, including the increase to the standard rate of VAT; there is no business requirement for this information, which means that it is not possible to determine the exact level of irrecoverable VAT.

Dogs: Tagging

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on compulsory microchipping of dogs. [31347]

Mr Paice: A proposal for all dogs to be compulsorily microchipped was included in DEFRA's consultation on dangerous dog legislation. DEFRA received 1,875 responses on this issue, of which 84% were in favour and 16% opposed. We are currently working with groups such as the RSPCA to look at a range of issues raised in the consultation, including microchipping.

My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Lord Henley) is due to announce the Government's approach to dangerous dogs early in the new year.

Environment Protection: Business

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will bring forward proposals to extend the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 to cover *(a)* water utility and *(b)* other private companies; and if she will make a statement. [32283]

Richard Benyon: The Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber) decided on 23 November 2010 that water and sewerage companies and water only companies are not public authorities for the purposes of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

DEFRA is currently examining the extent to which environmental information held by water and sewerage companies and water only companies is already available to the public.

The Government are not considering any proposals to amend the definition of public authorities in the EIR's at this time.

Insurance Premiums

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of properties which have insurance cover which is attributable to the July 2008 statement of principles agreed between her Department and the insurance industry. [31286]

Richard Benyon: No estimate has been made of the number of properties with insurance cover where that cover is attributable to the statement of principles between Government and the insurance industry. Insurers' decisions on provision of cover in flood risk areas are guided by the statement of principles, and are commercially confidential decisions.

Landfill

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what support her Department provides to companies to develop schemes to reduce the use of landfill; and if she will make a statement. [32103]

Richard Benyon: On 16 December, DEFRA published the final results from a survey of commercial and industrial waste in England. The results show that the amount of commercial and industrial waste sent to landfill in 2009 was 11.3 million tonnes, compared to 27.7 million tonnes in 2002.

The Government are carrying out a review of waste policies in England, due to be completed in spring 2011. The review is looking at ways of encouraging further improvements in waste prevention and recycling by businesses, including SMEs. This includes exploring voluntary responsibility deals with particular sectors.

Mackerel: Quotas

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department plans to take following the break down of negotiations with Iceland and the Faroe Islands on mackerel quotas. [31312]

Richard Benyon: I am very disappointed that it has not been possible to reach an agreement on the long-term management of the North East Atlantic mackerel stock with either Iceland or the Faroe Islands.

It is extremely important that this stock is managed on a sustainable basis in the future, and hence the issue was discussed at the EU Council of Ministers meeting in Brussels on 13-14 December. It was agreed that the EU would consider formal action, by way of sanctions, against Iceland following their decision to walk away from talks earlier this month.

The European Commission is still however hopeful that further discussions with the Faroes in the new year, will result in an agreement. The UK will continue to play a full part in any talks on this issue with the Commission and other member states.

Oil: Imports

Dan Byles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the potential effect on UK food distribution and food security of *(a)* a complete and indefinite stoppage of oil imports following a disruption in global oil supplies; and *(b)* a complete and indefinite halt in the long-term availability of petrol and diesel following disruption to domestic petrol and diesel supplies. [31360]

Mr Paice: The diversity of oil supply was assessed in the UK Food Security Assessment, which acknowledges the energy dependence of the food supply chain. The UK enjoys a diverse range of supplies of crude and refined products including indigenous oil production, domestically refined products and imports of crude oil and oil products from a range of EU and other countries.

Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) is the lead Government department coordinating the response to a significant disruption to oil supply or demand, be it domestic or international. As part of the ongoing programme of work conducted by the government to build resilience to disruptive challenges, DECC has developed the National Emergency Plan for Fuel (NEP-F). This identifies how the downstream oil industry and the Government need to respond in an emergency, using one or more emergency response tools to manage any significant disruption. If there is an actual or threatened oil emergency in the UK affecting fuel supplies, emergency powers under the Energy Act 1976 may be used. The NEP-F includes provisions to enable it to ensure the distribution of available fuel in support of critical areas including food supply.

Rural Payments Agency: Complaints

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complaints her Department received in relation to the processing of claims by the Rural Payments Agency in *(a)* 2007, *(b)* 2008, *(c)* 2009 and *(d)* 2010. [31969]

Mr Paice: The Rural Payments Agency has received the following number of complaints, as reported in the agency's annual reports and accounts for the financial years 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Financial year	*Number*
2007-08	1,149
2008-09	942
2009-10	1,116

The majority of complaints related to the processing of claims but the precise number could be identified only at disproportionate cost.

Sewage: Rivers

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information her Department holds on the amount of raw sewage pumped into the river network by water utility companies; and if she will make a statement. [32284]

Richard Benyon: All discharges to the river network are controlled by the Environment Agency's Environmental Permitting activities. This includes discharges from sewage treatment works and associated sewer systems. In conjunction with the Agency's monitoring programme this ensures that river water quality is protected. Combined sewer overflows (CSOs) allow the controlled discharge of dilute sewage mixed with rainwater when combined sewer systems become overwhelmed during periods of heavy rainfall. This prevents sewer flooding in homes and businesses. While some site specific information on the amounts discharged may be available on public registers it is not collated for all sites. However I strongly encourage water companies to make information on CSO spills available to all, where technically possible.

Trees

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much Forestry Commission land in each local authority area has sweet chestnut under management for coppicing. [31240]

Mr Paice: Forestry Commission records as at 31 March 2010 show that the area of sweet chestnut under management as coppice is as follows:

Unitary authority	*Area (hectares)*
City of Peterborough	17.2
County of Herefordshire	0.5
Dorset County	0.5
East Sussex County	66.7
Hampshire County	4.8
Isle of Wight	18.2
Kent County	558.9
North Somerset	0.4
Surrey County	15.2
West Sussex County	115.7
Wiltshire County	10.1

Water Power: Fisheries

Mr Marcus Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will meet representatives of anglers' and fisheries charities to discuss the effect on fish populations of hydropower schemes. [31939]

Richard Benyon: I intend to meet with angling and fisheries organisations early in the new year to discuss a range of angling and fisheries management issues. It is anticipated that hydropower will form part of those discussions.

Whales: Conservation

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with other member nations of the Antarctic Treaty on the conduct of the Japanese whaling fleet in Antarctic waters. [31758]

Richard Benyon: The UK regularly raises the issue of whaling in the Southern Ocean at ministerial and official level with Japan. Most recently, my hon. Friend the

Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr Browne) raised the issue on his visit to Japan in September. The Foreign Secretary also raised the matter during his visit to Japan in July.

Through the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the recognised global convention for whaling, the UK regularly raises our opposition to so called 'scientific' whaling in Antarctic waters. We fully support continued collaboration between the IWC and Antarctic treaty agreements, such as the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, in addressing areas of concern.

We are disappointed at the recent departure of the Japanese whaling fleet. Japan's action undermines the IWC moratorium on commercial whaling, the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary and international efforts to conserve and protect whales.

Further, the UK has strongly condemned any dangerous activity in the Southern Ocean, from any party, that risks human life and property in relation to the activities of vessels at sea.

Timber

Mr Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department plans to adopt in the UK to assist in global efforts against illegal logging and deforestation. [31331]

Mr Paice: Tackling illegal logging and deforestation is a priority for the coalition Government, and we are in the process of implementing two EU regulations to tackle the trade in illegal timber. The EU FLEGT (forest law enforcement, governance and trade) regulation, which will apply from early 2011, requires timber from countries which have signed a voluntary partnership agreement with the EU to carry a licence to prove that it has been legally harvested.

This will complement the recently agreed EU illegal timber (due diligence) regulation, which requires operators first placing timber and timber products on the EU market to exercise due diligence to ensure that this timber has been legally harvested. The regulation also includes a prohibition on the first placing of illegal timber on the EU market. I am confident that these measures will help us to eradicate illegal timber from the UK market, and thus support global efforts to tackle illegal logging and deforestation.

Timber: Imports

Mike Weatherley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what precautions are in place to reduce the risk of importation of harmful *(a)* insects and *(b)* diseases through the importation of wood for burning as biomass. [31392]

Mr Paice: Quarantine requirements for wood and wood products entering Great Britain are prescribed in the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005, which transposes EU-wide requirements set out in Council Directive 2000/29/EC. These, with one exception, apply to wood chips and other wood products for biomass in the same way as they do in the case of, for example, sawn wood and logs. The exception is wood in the form of pellets which, due to the manufacturing process, does not pose a risk of transmitting pests. All other consignments of regulated wood and wood products are required to be notified prior to landing and are subjected to plant health inspection by the Forestry Commission before being released by HM Revenue and Customs.

Slaughterhouses

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* departmental circulars and *(b)* other documents her Department has published consequent on the provisions of legislation regulating slaughterhouses in each of the last 10 years; what assessment she has made of the adequacy of enforcement of such legislation; how many persons of each (i) age, (ii) sex and (iii) police force area have been (A) prosecuted and (B) convicted of an offence under the provisions of such legislation in each of the last three years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [29837]

Mr Paice: Guidance on the welfare of poultry at slaughter was issued in December 2007 and DEFRA guidance on licensing and training of slaughtermen was last updated in May 2010.

Enforcement of welfare in slaughterhouses is the responsibility of the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The FSA conducted a survey of all approved slaughterhouses in May 2010 to establish whether food business operators are taking active steps to comply with legal requirements and achieve the necessary animal welfare standards. The survey also looked at whether Official Veterinarians and frontline teams are carrying out their roles effectively, with appropriate monitoring and relevant enforcement being taken in the event of food business operator non-compliance. This survey indicated standards of animal welfare met or exceeded legislative requirements in 94% of premises surveyed.

Details of prosecutions and convictions for offences under the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995 (as amended) are as follows:

Case	*Result*	*Sex*	*Age*	*Court area*
April 2007 to March 2008				
1.	Convicted	Company	Company	Reedley magistrates court
2.	Convicted	Male	47	North East Derbyshire and the Dales magistrates court
3.	Convicted	Male	53	Halifax magistrates court
4.	Convicted	Male	46	Halifax magistrates court
5.	Convicted	Company	Company	Bradford magistrates court
6.	Convicted	Company	Company	Nuneaton magistrates court

Case	*Result*	*Sex*	*Age*	*Court area*
7.	Convicted	Male	73	Stratford-upon-Avon magistrates court
8.	Convicted	Company	Company	Sleaford magistrates court
9.	Convicted	Company	Company	Nottingham magistrates court
10.	Convicted	Company	Company	Derby magistrates court
11.	Convicted	Company	Company	Sleaford magistrates court
12.	Convicted	Male	53	Halifax magistrates court
13.	Convicted	Male	46	Halifax magistrates court
14.	Convicted	Company	Company	Sleaford magistrates court
15.	Convicted	Company	Company	Milton Keynes magistrates court
April 2008 to March 2009				
1.	Convicted	Company	Company	Doncaster magistrates court
2.	Convicted	Company	Company	Ilkeston magistrates court
April 2009 to March 2010				
1.	Convicted	Male	53	Calderdale magistrates court
2.	Convicted	Male	46	Calderdale magistrates court
April 2010 to date				
1.	Convicted	Company	Company	Carlisle magistrates court
2.	Convicted	Company	Company	Cheltenham magistrates court
3.	Convicted	Company	Company	Halifax magistrates court
4.	Convicted	Male	63	Halifax magistrates court

Ministerial Corrections

Monday 13 December 2010

WORK AND PENSIONS

Children Maintenance

Mr Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Child Support Agency has *(a)* assessed as being due and *(b)* collected in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [22664]

[Official Report, 8 November 2010, Vol. 518, c. 170-172W.]

Letter of correction from Maria Miller:

An error has been identified in Table 1 of the written answer given to the hon. Member for Tewkesbury (Mr Robertson) on 8 November. The figure for the September 2006 annual assessed amount was incorrectly given as £1,146 million and should have been £1,446 million.

The full answer was given as follows:

Maria Miller: The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission is responsible for the child maintenance system. I have asked the Child Maintenance Commissioner to write to my hon. Friend with the information requested and I have seen the response.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Child Maintenance Commissioner.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much the Child Support Agency has (a) assessed as being due and (b) collected in each of the last five years for which figures are available: and if he will make a statement. [22664]

The attached table provides an estimate of the value of money assessed as being due and the value of money collected or arranged.

The value of money assessed as being due has been calculated by taking the average weekly assessment at September each year (excluding nil liability), and multiplying it by the caseload as at September.

Figures on average weekly assessment and caseload are available within the Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics available in the House of Commons library or online at

http://www.childmaintenance.org/en/publications/statistics.html

Table 1: Assessed amount due and collections

Quarter to:	*Cases with maintenance liability*	*Average weekly assessment (£)*	*Annual assessed amount (£ million)*	*Total Child Maintenance collected or arranged (£ million)*
September 2006	751,700	37	1,146	867
September 2007	825,100	35	1,502	942
September 2008	855,700	35	1,557	1,090
September 2009	834,000	34	1,475	1,131
September 2010	854,100	34	1,510	1,146

Notes:

1. Caseload figures rounded to nearest 100.
2. Arrears and collections figures rounded to nearest £1m.
3. Caseload figures include cases administered on both the CS2 and CSCS computer systems as well as cases administered off system with the exception of the September 2006 figure and represent a snapshot as of September each year.
4. Collections and arrangements are a true representation of the amount collected and arranged over the 12 months to September.
5. Weekly assessment figures include cases administered on the CS2 and CSCS computer systems only and exclude cases administered off system. Work is underway to more accurately calculate the value of assessments.

The correct answer should have been:

Maria Miller: The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission is responsible for the child maintenance system. I have asked the Child Maintenance Commissioner to write to my hon. Friend with the information requested and I have seen the response.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Child Maintenance Commissioner.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much the Child Support Agency has (a) assessed as being due and (b) collected in each of the last five years for which figures are available: and if he will make a statement. [22664]

The attached table provides an estimate of the value of money assessed as being due and the value of money collected or arranged.

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September 2009	834,000	34	1,475	1,131
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Notes:

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4. Collections and arrangements are a true representation of the amount collected and arranged over the 12 months to September.
5. Weekly assessment figures include cases administered on the CS2 and CSCS computer systems only and exclude cases administered off system. Work is under way to more accurately calculate the value of assessments.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (Ratification of Treaties)

The Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington): Part 2 also requires the Minister, if the "alternative procedure" in clause 23 is being used in exceptional circumstances, to lay a statement giving reasons.

[Official Report, 11 November 2010, Vol. 518, c. 22-23WS.]

Letter of correction from Mr David Lidington:

An error has been identified in the written statement that I made on 11 November 2010. The penultimate paragraph stated:

The Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington): Part 2 also requires the Minister, if the "alternative procedure" in clause 23 is being used in exceptional circumstances, to lay a statement giving reasons.

The correct statement should have been:

The Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington): Part 2 also requires the Minister, if the "alternative procedure" in section 22 is being used in exceptional circumstances, to lay a statement giving reasons.

JUSTICE

Probation Service: Employment

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice (1) how many people were employed by *(a)* Durham and *(b)* Teesside probation areas on 31 December 2009; [25259]

(2) how many people were employed by Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust on 30 June 2010. [25260]

[Official Report, 22 November 2010, Vol. 519, c. 124W.]

Letter of correction from Mr Crispin Blunt:

An error has been identified in the written answer given to the hon. Member for Bishop Auckland (Helen Goodman) on 22 November 2010.

The full answer given was as follows:

Mr Blunt: The total staff in post for Durham Probation Area on 31 December 2009 was 268.65 FTE (full-time equivalent), and for Teesside Probation Area this was 292.06 FTE.

The total staff in post in Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust on 30 June 2010 was 572.27 FTE (full-time equivalent).

The correct answer should have been:

Mr Blunt: The total staff in post for Durham Probation Area on 31 December 2009 was 271.94 FTE (full-time equivalent), and for Teesside Probation Area this was 313.26 FTE.

The total staff in post in Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust on 30 June 2010 was 565.84 FTE (full-time equivalent).

Ministerial Corrections

Tuesday 21 December 2010

JUSTICE

Heroin Addiction

24. **Mr Ainsworth:** To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many of those serving a prison sentence have been treated for heroin addiction. [25584]

[Official Report, 23 November 2010, Vol. 519, c. 287W.]

Letter of correction from Mr Nick Herbert:

An error has been identified in the written answer given to the right hon. Member for Coventry North East (Mr Ainsworth) on 23 November 2010. Unfortunately, the answer contained an error relating to the number of heroin users (4,933) that have entered accredited drug treatment programmes in 2009-10. The full answer given was as follows:

Nick Herbert: Of those adults remanded or sentenced in 2009-10, 60,067 had clinical interventions for the management of heroin dependence, and 4,933 heroin users entered accredited drug treatment programmes in custody in the same period.

The correct answer should have been:

Nick Herbert: Of those adults remanded or sentenced in 2009-10, 60,067 had clinical interventions for the management of heroin dependence, and 4,633 heroin users entered accredited drug treatment programmes in custody in the same period.

National Probation Service: Manpower

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many probation service employees of each grade there were in probation areas on 31 December *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2007, *(c)* 2008 and *(d)* 2009; and if he will make a statement. [26594]

[Official Report, 25 November 2010, Vol. 519, c. 456-58W.]

Letter of correction from Mr Crispin Blunt:

An error has been identified in the written answer given to the hon. Member for Wigan (Lisa Nandy) on 25 November 2010. Unfortunately, there was a problem with the locally purchased extract tool not extracting all of the staff in post figures: in Teesside it excluded one team; in Durham it did not identify when hours of work, and therefore full-time equivalence (FTE), had changed slightly. Therefore, some of the staff in post figures provided for Teesside and Durham within the national figures for December 2009 were incorrect. The full answer given was as follows:

Mr Blunt: The staff in post figures for the probation service by job group at 31 December 2006-2009 are shown in the following table.

The table shows that there was an overall decrease in staff in post over the period of 1,339.26 FTE (down 6.3%).

Job group	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Area/District Manager	174.39	185.60	198.74	160.78
Assistant Chief Officer	306.50	300.68	269.38	281.66
Chief Officer	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00
Deputy Chief Officer	80.35	72.17	53.50	42.81
Middle Manager	1,616.55	1,596.22	1,799.58	1,716.61
Other operational staff	618.19	615.76	711.82	692.14
Other staff	175.12	114.57	191.84	234.08
Practice Development Assessor	192.35	171.89	174.61	104.16
Probation Officer	5,398.88	5,368.16	5,363.77	5,318.87
Probation Services Officer	6,326.01	6,060.30	5,609.96	5,583.13
Psychologist	27.50	17.20	20.04	15.02
Senior practitioner	286.77	258.05	220.02	183.08
Support staff administration	4,564.31	4,494.75	4,643.23	4,342.34
Support staff—other	251.27	297.54	749.43	728.33
Trainee Probation Officer	1,134.09	1,138.00	903.04	402.90
Treatment Manager	176.70	161.47	186.71	177.99
Not recorded	0.00	0.00	2.00	5.82
Sum	21,370.98	20,894.36	21,139.67	20,031.72

The correct answer should have been:

Mr Blunt: The staff in post figures for the probation service by job group at 31 December 2006-09 are shown in the following table.

The table shows that there was an overall decrease in staff in post over the period of 1,315.99 FTE (down 6.2%).

Job group	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Area/District Manager	174.39	185.60	198.74	160.78
Assistant Chief Officer	306.50	300.68	269.38	281.66
Chief Officer	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00
Deputy Chief Officer	80.35	72.17	53.50	42.81
Middle Manager	1,616.55	1,596.22	1,799.58	1,718.81
Other operational staff	618.19	615.76	711.82	694.14
Other staff	175.12	114.57	191.84	234.08
Practice Development Assessor	192.35	171.89	174.61	104.16
Probation Officer	5,398.88	5,368.16	5,363.77	5,322.06
Probation Services Officer	6,326.01	6,060.30	5,609.96	5,595.20

Job group	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Psychologist	27.50	17.20	20.04	15.02
Senior practitioner	286.77	258.05	220.02	183.08
Support staff — administration	4,564.31	4,494.75	4,643.23	4,345.15
Support staff — other	251.27	297.54	749.43	729.33
Trainee Probation Officer	1,134.09	1,138.00	903.04	402.90
Treatment Manager	176.70	161.47	186.74	177.99
Not recorded	0.00	0.00	2.00	5.82
Sum	21,370.98	20,894.36	21,139.67	20,054.99

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Western Sahara: Food

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assessment he has made of *(a)* the food security situation in Western Sahara and *(b)* the implication for food security in that country of the arrival of recent settlers; [30062]

(2) how much his Department spent on agricultural development in Western Sahara in each of the last five years; and what proportion of that expenditure was in respect of the *(a)* Saharawi population and *(b)* Moroccan settlers; [30063]

(3) how much his Department spent on emergency food aid in Western Sahara in each of the last five years; and what proportion of that expenditure was in respect of the *(a)* Saharawi population and *(b)* Moroccan settlers. [30064]

[Official Report, 13 December 2010, Vol. 520, c. 447W.]

Letter of correction from Mr Stephen O'Brien:

An error has been identified in the written answer given to the hon. Member for Islington North (Jeremy Corbyn) on 13 December 2010. The full answer given was as follows:

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not have a bilateral aid programme in Western Sahara and has not provided direct emergency funds to the country in the last five years. We support Western Sahara through our share of the budget of the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). ECHO has provided €133 million in humanitarian aid to Western Sahara since it was established. DFID monitors all humanitarian situations on an ongoing basis.

The correct answer should have been:

Mr O'Brien: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not have a bilateral aid programme in Western Sahara and has not provided direct emergency funds to the country in the last five years. We support Western Sahara through our share of the budget of the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). ECHO has provided €165 million in humanitarian aid since it was established. DFID monitors all humanitarian situations on an ongoing basis.